

Long Old
THE
DOCTRINE
OF
FASTING
AND PRAYER
AND HUMILIA-
tion for Sinne.

Delivered
IN SUNDRY SER-
mons at the Fast appoint-
ed by publike authority,
in the year 16

*By that late Faithfull and Worthy
Minister of Jesus Christ,*

ARTH. HILDERSAM.

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DOCTRINE
OF
FASTING
AND PRAYER
AND OTHER

FOR THE
USE OF
THE
SACRAMENTS
AND
THE
SACRIFICE
OF THE
MASS

BY
THE
REV. FATHER
JOHN
BAPTIST
MARTIN

143302

Printed by R. Johnson, at the
press of the University of
Cambridge



TO HIS MOST
WORTHY, AND

much-honoured Patron

Master *William Cokayne*,

Merchant, at his house

in *Austine Fryers* in

LONDON.

SIR,



H O P E the
world will not
blame mee for
increasing the
crowd of En-
glish Writers, with which
it is so much troubled; nor
censure mee of folly for
thrusting this little Booke
into the throng, where it is
like to bee smothered, if it

A 3

may

THE EPISLE

may bee admitted to put in this plea. To the first, that as a dutifull sonne, in honour of my deare Fathers name and memory, I strive for some place for this Monument, which may bee some meanes to perpetuate the same in Gods Church: as a faithfull Executor, I am carefull to discharge this part of his (though but nuncupative) Will, to endeavour the publishing of this, and some other of his Workes, which himselfe intended, and had prepared for the Presse. To the latter I plead, that though it bee in it selfe but small, yet will it finde in the throng a Booke to which it is neerly allyed, a child of the same Authors brain and heart (the Lectures
on

DEDICATORY.

on Saint *John* 4.) which having found free and speedy passage, will make way for this, and easily procure it welcome and entertainment, where it selfe hath found the like; and I presume elsewhere also: for so much as the company of this may be procured at a farre easier charge than the former. And as it hath one already to lead the way, so (God willing) ere long (I hope) it shall bee seconded by another of later birth, but greater growth. It no way becommeth mee to commend this or any other worke of his (let me rather strive to imitate him my self, than to commend him, or any thing of his to others) his very name will commend them. And lest under that

A 4. name,

THE EPISLE

name, the Reader should suspect hee may be abused: I here solemnly promise, that what is or shall bee by mee published under his name, shall not be loose notes (that have beene taken by some ignorant Scribe). nor shall it be made up with additions, and alterations of my owne; but the Copies under his owne hand carefully transcribed.

And as for publishing these Sermons, I have good reason, so for dedicating them to your selfe. The occasion of them was that hea-
vie Visitation, which was then upon your City; the drift of one part of them, was to move his auditors to commiserate the(then) wo-
full estate of it: to you there-
fore

DEDICATORY.

fore as a Citizen (of no
meane note) have I dire-
cted them, but principally
to you as my Patron. I have
not, nor expect any thing of
mine owne worthy pub-
lique view: this I owne not
as Author, but as Heire to
the Author: and it being in
mine hands, I thought it my
duty (being the first booke
I had to dispose of) to pre-
sent it first unto those hands,
which freely bestowed the
Presentation to this Parso-
nage upon mee. I have beene
for above these foure years,
covetous of some faire op-
portunity to witnesse to the
world my thankefull ac-
knowledgement of your fa-
vour to me; and to give pub-
lique testimony of your
worthy and exemplary in-

THE EPISTLE

regrity, in discharging the trust reposed in you (to dispose of this Benefice) without respect to your owne gaine, or pleasuring of your friends, neglecting bribes of breath or money. You intended not to enrich your selfe by this part of the Churches Patrimony, nor to make up other losses by gaining by this. It was your care not onely to shunne the grievous sinne of Simony and corruption, but to avoid all suspition of it, you passed by the neere relation of kindred, the importunate solicitation of friends, the mediation of great Personages, and were pleased in your choyce to crave the direction of your pious, learned, and most industrious Pastour

DEDICATORY.

flour, the great blessing and ornament of your City and Parish: his love (which I may never forget, though I shall not in any degree requite) induced him to nominate mee; your confidence in his judgement and uprightnesse, made you upon his commendation to make choyce of mee a meere stranger, for your Clerke. Never had any Parson or Parish more cause thankfully to acknowledge the religious care, and pious integrity of a Patron, than wee here have: or take any occasion to lay this your good worke open to wide report, and to propound you as a patterne to them that are entrusted with such charges.

I doe

THE EPISTLE

I doe and shall praise God,
 as long as I live, for rai-
 sing you (beyond my
 thoughts and expectations)
 an instrument of so great
 good to mee: by your
 meanes hee hath freed mee
 from those snares, wherein
 many of our coate are (in
 these corrupt times) intan-
 gled. I doe not eate the
 bread of (either direct or
 indirect) Simony, but that
 which by GODS provi-
 dence, your uncorrupt hand
 hath reached out to mee, a
 morsell of which will give
 mee more content, than a-
 bundance of the former sort.
 I doubt not but God will
 abundantly requite your
 kindnesse to his house, that
 hee will blesse you in your
 Merchandise, & exchanges,
 who

DEDICATORY,

who have beene so carefull
not to make Merchandise of
the Soules of men, or to
make sale of the Patrimony
of the Church, and portion
of Gods Ministers; that he
will continue and increase
your comfort in your hope-
full children, who have been
so faithfull a Guardian to this
people; but principally that
hee will blesse you in your
Soule with Spirituall and
Heavenly graces and com-
fort, the meanes of which,
you have beene so carefull
to provide for this place.
For all which (as I hope,
so) I shall continually pray;
and such prayers are the
best, and onely requi-
tall, I can make, and that
I know, which you will
accept of, together with
this

THE EPISTLE &c.

this mine acknowledgement,
before witnesse, and
upon record, that I am

West-Pelton in the
County of Salop.
21 Decem. 8. 1632.

*Yours in the bonds
of thankfulnessse
most obliged.*

SAMUEL HILDERSAM.

Samuel Spate man



THE AUTHOURS
Prayer before his
LECTURE.

THy Word (O Lord)
is holy and pure, as
is thine owne Ma-
jestie, and being
sincerely preached,
worketh either to the salvation
or condemnation of the hearers.
And we all that are here assem-
bled before thee at this time,
are of uncircumcised hearts and
eares: utterly unworthy by rea-
son of that sinne wherein wee
were conceived and borne; and
of those aduall transgressions
that wee have multiplied a-
gainst thy Majestie, in thought,
word and deed, from our first
being untill this present houre,
once to set foote into thy Temple,
or to heare thy Word at all;
Utterly

The Prayer.

Utterly unfit, and unable by reason of our custome in sinne, and the heardnesse of our hearts to profit by it, when as we do heare it. So that (Lord) wee are at this time in danger to be unprofitable hearers of thy holy Word, & by being unprofitable hearers of the same, we are in danger of thy heauie displeasure. Yet forasmuch as it hath pleased thee in mercy to command in this exercise, to appoint it to be the onely ordinary meanes, whereby thou wilt worke Faith & Repentance in thy children; & the principall meanes whereby thou wilt increase them, to promise also graciously that thou wilt accompany the outward ministry of thy Word, with the inward grace and blessing of thy Spirit, in the hearts of them that shall be reverently and faithfully exercised in the same: We therefore in humble obedience to this thy holy commandement, and in full affiance and confidence in this thy

The Prayer.

thy gracious promise, are bold to present our selves before thee at this time, beseeching thee in thy Sonnes blood to wash away all our sinnes, so as they may never be layd to our charge again, either in the world to come to our condemnation, or at this time to bring a curse upon this our exercise. Good Lord so sprinkle that blood of thy Sonne upon our consciences, that wee may be assured of thy love and favour towards us in him. By it sanctifie us at this time, and thy Word to our use, opening and enlightning our understanding so as we may be able to understand and conceive of thy Word aright, strengthening our memories so as we may be able to remember it, softning our hard and stony hearts so as wee may be able to beleeve it, to yeeld unto it, to apply it to our owne soules, to meditate and conferre thereupon, to practise it in our lives & conversations, so stir up
one

The Prayer.

one another to the obedience thereof. That this our exercise may tend to the increase of our knowledge and of our obedience, of our Faith and of our Repentance, the glory of thy blessed Name and the everlasting comfort of our own soules. Heare us (O Lord) in these our requests, in what else soever thou knowest good for us, or any of thy Church, for Iesus Christ his sake our Lord and onely Saviour. In whose name we continue our prayers unto thee, as hee himselfe hath taught us, saying,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

SERMON



SERMON I.

AUGUST III.

MDCXXV.

PSAL. 35. 13.

But as for mee, when they were sicke, my clothing was sack-cloth: I humbled my selfe with fasting, and my prayer returned into mine owne bar-some.



Or to take up time in speaking of the former part of this Psalme: these words have this coherence and dependance on that which went before.

David (as a type of Christ) having many mortall enemies, doth in this Psalme (by a Propheticall

Serm. 1. pheticall spirit) pray against them, or rather foretell what should befall them. In this Verse & the former (to shew what cause he had to do so) he aggravateth their sin by their unthankfulness in dealing so badly with him, that had deserved so well of them.

The parts of this Verse are two: viz.

Time when he did it, & the occasion he tooke to do it. *When they were sick.*

Dutie Out- Sack-
wherby he ward cloth.

1 The expressed helps
kindneshe his love; he he u-
shewed to prayed for fed in Fast-
these men: them: wch it, ing.
wherin ob is amplifi- Inward dis-
serve, the ed by the position of
extraordi- his mind in
nary man- it: he hum-
ner of it, bled, or af-
fected forth flicted his
both by the soule

2 The successe and comfort hee found in it.

Observe

Observe first *Dauids* practice; he was wont, when these men were sicke, to be affected with their misery: which teacheth us, That

Gods people ought to take to heart the miseries and calamities of others, the judgements of God that doe befall others.

See for prooffe of this, both the examples of his servants, and then *Gods* commandement also.

When *Eliphaz*, *Bildad* and *Zophar* heard of *Jobs* misery, they came to mourne with him, *Job* 2. 11. But hee was a rare man for piety and authority also (you will say:) see therefore another example of this duty performed towards them: that were not so: *Did not I weep for him that was in trouble?* (saith *Job*, chap. 30. 25.) *was not my soule grieved for the poore?* Yea, see an example of this towards most wicked men, *Judg.* 21. 2. The people of *Israel* came
to

Serm. 1.
Note 1.

Doct. 1.

Prooffe 1.

Serm. 1.

1. 1. 1. 1.

2.

to the house of God (as we doe now) to professe their sorrow for the extreme misery that the wicked Benjamites were most justly fallen into.

Yea, we are straitly charged by the Lord to doe so, to remember and thinke of them, as if their case were our owne. *Remember them that are in bonds, (saith the Apostle, Hebr. 13.3.) as bound with them: and them that are in adversity, as being your selves also in the body.* Yea, to doe it with hearty commiseration, *Rom. 12.15. Weep with them that weep.* Yea (if the judgement be famous and exemplary) we are commanded also to make publike and solemne profession (as we doe at this day) that we are affected with their misery: *Levit. 10.6. Let your brethren the whole house of Israel bewaile the burning which the Lord hath kindled.*

Three speciall reasons and
grounds

grounds there bee for this Doctrine: for wee should take to heart the miseries and calamities of others.

Serm. 1.

First, in respect had to them that are afflicted. For, admit they were not our fellow-members in Christ, nor our kindred or acquaintance, nor our country-men, admit they were meere strangers to us, admit they were all most wicked men, yet nature bindes us to be affected with their miseries, because they are our owne flesh; *Esa. 58. 7. Hide not thy selfe from thine owne flesh.* And hee that hath not humanity and naturall affection in him, certainly hath no grace, but is given up to a reprobate minde, as the Apostle teacheth us, *Rom. 1. 31.* Yea it is an argument of a cruell heart, to be void of naturall commiseration, and carelesse of other men, whether they sinke or swimme. In this *Cain* first bewrayed his murderous heart, when

Reason.
I.

Serm. 1.

when he said of his brother, *Gen. 4.9. Am I my brothers keeper?* And so did the chiefe Priests and Elders, when (hearing *Judas* cry out of himselfe for his sinne, and beholding him in the pangs of desparation) they said unto him, *What is that to us? see thou to that, Mat. 27.4.*

Reason

2.

Secondly, In respect had unto the Lord, who by these judgements executed upon others, doth manifest from heaven that his wrath is kindled, that he is in a fury. So that not to be affected with his judgements executed upon others, is a double contempt done to the Lord himselfe.

1. In that wee are not moved, nor tremble to see him angry. *Amos 3.8. The Lyon hath roared, who will not feare?* It is hard to find a man so stout and couragious, (shall I say?) nay, so senselesse or prophane, that trembleth not sometimes at the fearfull thunder-claps and light-

Serm. 1.

lightnings, because God therein manifesteth his glorious power; and because that though hee strike not many with them usually, yet some hee doth: but there is much more cause to tremble, and be affected with his generall and extraordinary judgements upon others: for thereby hee doth not only manifest his glorious power, but his revenging justice also, and anger against sinne; which is much more terrible than the other. See a proof of this, *Ezech.* 32. 10. *The Kings of the Nations shall be horribly afraid for thee, when I shall brandish my sword before them, and they shall tremble at every moment; every man for his owne life, in the day of thy fall.* The Hea-then (that had no goodnesse in them at all) when they should behold how terrible God was in his judgements upon his own people, should be in continuall feare that hee would destroy

B

them

Serm. 1.

them also: as the Scholar that is himselfe faulty, and obnoxious to the rod, when hee seeth his master in a fury against any of his fellowes, cannot choose but tremble, unlesse he be desperate. This made the Prophet (when God had in a vision manifested to him his glory, Esa. 6. 45. when hee saw the posts of the temple doore moved at the voice of the Angell that cryed, and the house filled with smoake) to cry out (from the very consciounesse of his owne sinfulness and deserts) *Woe is mee, for I am undone, because I am a man of uncleane lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of uncleane lips, for mine eyes have seene the King, the Lord of Hosts.*

2 There is in this another contempt also done unto God; because God never smites some, but to warne all what is due to them, and what they must looke for, unlesse they repent. Even those executions which the Magistrate

Serm. 1.

gistrate doth by Gods appointment upon foule offenders, are done chiefly to warne others: *Dent. 13. 11. All Israel shall heare and feare, and shall doe no more any such wickednesse as this is amongst you.* But much more those judgements which the Lord himselfe hath executed upon any, (either immediately, or by his destroying Angels) are intended chiefly for the instruction and warning of others. *The righteous shall see and feare,* saith David, *Psal. 52. 6.* The Lord consumed the Sodomites in that fearefull maner, *to make them an example to those that after should live ungodly,* *2 Pet. 2. 6.* And the earth swallowed up *Corah, Dathan and Abiram,* not onely out of that respect God had to the glory of his owne justice, in taking vengeance on them for all their finnes, but that they might become a signe unto others, as the Holy Ghost saith expresly,

Serm. 1. *Num. 26. 10.* Every judgement of God hath a voyce, and is a reall Sermon of repentance: and the more generall and extraordinary the judgement is, by so much the lowder, and more audible voyce it hath: and it is therefore a contempt done to God, when we regard it not, nor hearken unto it: *Mica 6. 9.* *Heare the rod, and who hath appointed it.*

Reason

3.

The third and last reason and ground of the Doctrine is, in respect had to our selves. For there is no judgement executed upon others, (specially if it bee any whit publike and generall, and more than ordinary) but wee all are to take our selves interested in it: yea to have had a hand in provoking the Lord unto it. For, as sinne is the cause of all Gods judgements that come upon a land, so wee must not judge them the greatest sinners alwayes upon whom they light. *Those nineteene upon whom*

Serm. 1.

whom the tower of Siloam fell, thinke yee (saith our Saviour, Luk. 13. 4, 5.) that they were sinners above all that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you nay. Neither must wee thinke, that the sins of those whom God smites with his judgements are the only cause of the judgements, or that hee is angry with them only; but know, that he is as well angry oft times with those that hee spares, as with those whom hee smites: and the finnes of those whom he spares, have oft a stronger hand in plucking down the judgement, than the sins of those whom he smites have had. Two notable examples we have for this in the time of David. It was a fearefull judgment that God executed upon Uzza: 1 Chron. 13. 10. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him because hee put his hand to the Arke: and it is said, vers. 12. that the judgement upon Uzza much

Serm. 1.

affected *David*, and made his heart quake. And why so surely, because he knew that God was not angry with *Uzza* onely, but with the whole congregation. The Lord our God (saith *David*, 1 Chron. 15. 13.) made a breach upon us, for that wee sought him not after the due order. He knew that the sins of the Priests, and others that were spared, provoked God to that judgement more than *Uzza's* did, as appears in the beginning of that Verse. For, because yee did it not at the first, the Lord our God, &c. The second example is, 2 Sam. 24. It was a fearefull judgement that is mentioned in the fifteenth Verse, When by a pestilence that the Lord sent upon *Israel*, in three dayes, there died of the people from *Dan* even to *Beersheba* seventy thousand men: and they that were slaine had (doubtlesse) sin enough in themselves to deserve it: but was their sinne the only

only or the chiefe cause of that judgement? no certainly; the sinne of those that were spared was the chiefe cause of it, as *David* confesseth *Verf. 17. Loe, I have sinned and have done wickedly: but these sheep what have they done?* Hee knew well that (not the sins of those that perished in that grievous plague, but) his own sinnes had a chiefe hand in provoking God unto that judgment. So that we see that there is no one man amongst us all, that hath not just reason to bee affected with Gods judgments upon the Land, though himselfe bee spared; seeing that hee is a cause of it, as well as they that are smitten, and (it may be) as great a cause as they, nay, (it may bee) a greater cause than any of them were.

And this was that that made good *Nehemia* cry thus in his prayer unto God, *Neh. 1. 6. Both I and my fathers house have sinned.* As if hee had said, that

Serna. 1.3

Jerusalem prospers no better, I and my fathers house are as great a cause as any other.

We have heard the Doctrine which this example of *David* teacheth us, delivered and confirmed in a general manner; let us now come to make use of it, and to apply it to our owne case, and to the occasion of our meeting at this time.

This Doctrine therefore serveth to exhort us unto two duties. First, that we would labour to take to heart, and to be rightly affected with this judgement of God that is now upon *London*, and sundry other parts of the Kingdome. Secondly, that when wee are rightly affected with it, we would make right use of it to our selves.

*Use 1.
Object.*

For the first. You will say it is a needlesse exhortation: for, who is not affected with this plague? who is not afraid of it? and wherefore come we hither else if we be not affected with it?

I answer,

I answer, That none of us (I feare) are sufficiently affected with it; and that this is the fountaine and foundation of all good uses wee can make of it, either for their benefit that are visited with it, or for our selves, that we would labour to be affected with this judgement of God, as wee ought to be. I will therefore shew you what just causes wee have to bee deeply affected with this judgement. And they are principally three.

First, in respect of the grievousnesse of the judgement it selfe. For wee shall finde this called one of Gods sore judgements, *Ezek. 14. 21.* And when the Lord threatens that hee himselfe would fight against *Jerusalem* with an outstretched hand, and a strong arme, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath, *Jer. 21. 5.* hee tels them in the next Vers. how hee would doe this, *He would smite the city with a*

Serm. 1.

Answ.

Serm. 1. *great pestilence.* Certainly the Lord therefore now fights against our Land, yea he fighteth against it in fury, and in great wrath. Observe foure things in this judgement.

First, what a waster it is : *Psalm. 91.6.* it is called *the destruction that wasteth at noone-day.* In a short time, even in three daies it consumed seventy thousand in Israel, *2 Sam. 24.15.* A grievous judgement it must needs bee, when God himselfe matcheth a pestilence of three dayes continuance (as a thing of equall force to afflict and destroy) with a famine of seven yeares, and with flying by the space of three moneths before their enemies that pursued them: as we know hee doth, *2 Sam. 24.13.* And hath not the pestilence that God hath now sent into our Land proved a terrible waster, when in one weeke in one City it hath swept away three thousand, five hundred, eighty two?

Secondly,

Serm. I.

Secondly, consider how suddenly it takes them away that have beene smitten with it: many that were well in the morning have beene dead of it before night: it is therefore called the Lords *arrow*, *Psal. 91. 5.* It strikes and pierceth men suddenly with a deadly wound: and *Verf. 6.* it is said to *walke in darknesse*. And certainly, sudden death (though it be not absolutely to bee prayed against, yet it) is to bee esteemed a temporall judgement, and a signe of Gods anger. *Let destruction come upon him at unawares*, saith the Prophet here, *Verf. 8.* It must needs adde much to the bitterness of death, when it comes so suddenly, that a man can neither commend himselfe to God, nor set things in order for the world before he die.

Thirdly, consider, it is such a judgement as oft makes men destroyers of them whom they most love, and desire to keepe alive:

Serm. I.

live : the father setting at unawares the infection upon the child, the husband on the wife, a man on his dearest friend. A great cause of humbling it is, for a man to have killed any other man at unawares, as you may see by that law, *Nim.* 35.28. and what is it then to have killed them that are dearest to them?

Fourthly, it is such a sickness as doth (usually) debarre men of many comforts that other sicke persons doe enjoy. First, many that are visited with this sicknesse doe want convenient attendance and lodging, dying in the streets and highwayes, of whom that may be said, *Esay* 51.20. *Thy sonnes have fainted; they lie at the head of all streets; they are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of thy God.* Secondly, their friends dare not visit them; which, as it is a worke of mercy, so it is a great meanes of comfort to the afflicted, and such as Christ hath enioyned

Serm. I.

joynd us, *Mat. 25. 36.* Thirdly, whereas none haue so much need of spirituall comfort as they, because the very disease makes them more subject to terrors and fears than others, (and is therefore called *the terror by night*, *Psal. 91. 5.*) they (poore wretches) can haue none to comfort them, but may in anguish of soule cry out, *Lam. 1. 16. The comforter that should relieve my soule is farre from me.* So that in respect of this first consideration, the grievousnesse of the judgement it selfe, they may cry to us all, and to all Gods people throughout the Land, as *Lam. 1. 12. Is it nothing to you all yee that passe by? Behold and see, if there bee any sorrow like unto my sorrow where-with the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his anger. And will you not be affected with it?*

Secondly, if this will not serue, come to a second cause wee have to be deeply affected with

it:

Serm. 1.

it : because none of us can tell how farre it may goe, how neare it may come to our owne dwellings. In which respect, though we may say as *Num. 16. 46.* wee are sure *wrath is gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun;* yet as the Psalmist saith, *Psal. 74. 9. There is not amongst us any that knoweth how long it will last, or how farre it will spread.*

Let no man say, I am farre enough from London ; I dwell in a good ayre, and wee have taken good order to prevent all danger of this infectious disease ; no carriers shall come from thence to us, no Londoners shall lodge amongst us. These are good meanes, I will not deny, (if they bee used with that compassion that becomes Christians to shew unto them in misery) and must not be neglected : but all these cannot secure us from the plague ; if wee doe not first make our peace with God, all these are in vaine. If we beare in

O UR

Serm. 1.

our bosome the cause of the plague, if wee nourish and increase it daily, (I meane our finnes). wee cannot be sure to keepe it from our townes and houses, do what wee can. Know thou for a surety it is God that sends the pestilence, as he saith, *2 Chron. 7. 13.* In this judgement (above others) we are said to fall into the Lords hands, as *David* speaketh, *2 Sam. 24. 14.* And as hee sends it, so he onely guides it whither it shall goe, and whither it shall not goe; whom it shall smite, and whom it shall spare. And though he do usually send it by outward and ordinary meanes, yet alwaies he doth not so. Some that live in the thickest of them that are infected, and in a most corrupt aire, do escape; some that flie from the places infected into the purest aire, are infected they know not how. How many Physitians, and Chyrurgians, and nurses, and keepers that have

Serm. 1.

have beene wont to visit the infected, to sweate them, to dresse their sores, to wash their linnen; yea, how many that have daily conversed with them, and lye in bed with them also, have beene knowne to have escaped the infection altogether? whereas many that have beene most carefull to keepe themselves from all that have beene infected, and to use all good preservatives against the contagion, have beene taken by it. No man may argue from hence (as some foolishly have done) that this disease is not in it owne nature more infectious than other diseases are: no more than (from this that the three noble Jewes that were cast into *Nebuchadnezzars* furnace, received no hurt at all by it, *Dan. 3. 27.* and that oft times one house in a street, or roome in a house escape burning, in the greatest fires that have beene heard of) a man may conclude, that fire is

not

Serm. I.

not in it selfe of a burning and consuming nature. But in this, as in the other, the finger and power of God is to be acknowledged in restraining, and setting bounds to this heauey judgment, as pleaseth him. And this the Lord (doubtlesse) doth, to hearten and encourage them that are whole, to performe all necessary duties of mercy and love to them that are sicke. And as the Lord can thus limit the plague of pestilence; so can he (if he please) command it to goe through our whole Land before it cease, as he did through the Land of Israel, *2 Sam. 24. 15. from Dan to Beersheba*. Though we flie from it, hee can follow and pursue us with it (as he hath done many) and threatneth, *I will persecute (& follow them) with the pestilence*, saith he, *Jer. 29. 18*. Though wee shut our doores against it, hee can make it come in at our windowes, as they complaine,

Jer.

Serm. 1. *Jen. 9. 21. Death is come up to our mindes, and is entred into our palaces. Let no man thinke hee can bee sure to avoid this judgment by flying from it, if he bee not carefull to remove the cause of it, and to make his peace with God. Do therefore (before it come nearer to thee) as the Lord himselfe counsel- leth thee, Amas 4. 12. Pre- pare to meete thy God. And be- cause thou canst have no assu- rance in thy selfe that thou shalt be able to avoyd the danger of the indignation of this King, that comes against thee (for ought thou knowest) with so great a power, learnethar wise- dome that our Saviour directeth thee unto, Luk. 14. 32. While he is yet a great way off, send an am- bassage, and desire conditions of peace with him. If thou wouldst bee free from the feare of the plague, feare God aright. Be not afraid (saith the Prophet, Esa. 8. 12. 13.) sanctifie the Lord of Hosts*

Hostes himselfe, and let him be your feare, and let him bee your dread. If wee could feare the Lord as we ought, we should not need to feare any thing else in the world. Be sure to make thy peace with him; which how thou mayest doe, I will tell thee by and by.

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Thirdly and lastly, (to cause us to take to heart, and to be affected with this fearfull plague) consider, that if this judgement be neglected, (as great as it is) it will be but a fore-runner of some more fearefull judgement than this is. And as our Saviour speaketh in another case, *Matth. 24.8.* this will be but *the beginning of our sorrows.* There is a judgement (that this nation hath hitherto beene preserved from, to the astonishment and admiration of all the world) that is greater than this; for it useth to bring this, and the famine also with it, I meane warre. The sword of our bloody

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bloody and mercilesse enemies is worse than the plague. This is plaine by *Dauids* choyce, *2 Sam. 24. 14.* *Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, (for his mercies are great) and let mee not fall into the hand of man.* And surely wee have cause to feare, that if this will doe us no good, God cannot endure to have his judgements despised. Heare what he saith. *Lev. 26. 18.* *If you will not for all this hearken unto mee, then I will punish you seven times more for your sinnes.* And certainly I may say to all you that heare mee this day, If you regard not, nor profit by this fearfull plague you heare of in London, and in other parts of the Land, God will either bring it home to you, or a worse plague than it: *Luk. 13. 3.* *Except ye repent, yee shall all likewise perish.*

The second duty that this Doctrine serveth to exhort us to, is, that we would make right use of this

this judgement of God that is upon the Land, unto our selves. And that standeth in foure points.

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First, seeing first God gives us in this judgement such cause of sorrow, seeing he is angry: and secondly, not with the Londers onely, but with us, with the whole Land: and thirdly, it may be more with us than with them: and fourthly, seeing wee know not how soone this fire that burnes our neighbours house, may light upon ours: We must therefore examine every one of us our own waies. This direction is given us, *Lam. 3. 39, 40. Wherefore doth a living man complain; a man for the punishment of his sins?* As if the Church there should say, why doe men mourne and fret, and take on so for this judgement of God that is justly fallen upon them? Why doe they not betake themselves to the right course for the pacifying of Gods wrath? Which is this, and this onely, *Let*

Serm. 1.

we search and try our wayes, and
 turne againe to the Lord. Every
 one of us should say thus
 within himselfe, Surely the Lord
 is very angry with the whole
 Land, with every one of us; and
 what have I done to anger the
 Lord thus, to provoke him to
 this wrath? *Jer. 8. 6, 7.* the
 Lord chargeth the Jewes that
 they did not know his judge-
 ments, because *no man said,*
What have I done? And so
 surely will hee judge of us.
 Wee know not the meaning of
 the plague, nor make right use of
 it, unlesse every one of us enter
 into his owne heart, and say,
 What have I done? To this end
 it will bee profitable for us to
 search the Scriptures, and finde
 out what were the speciall sins
 which either have brought the
 pestilence upon Gods people in
 former times, or which the
 Lord hath threatned to punish
 in this manner, and with this
 judgement. For the first, I finde
 five

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five great plagues of pestilence recorded in the holy Scriptures, and the speciall finnes that were the causes of them, are also plainly set downe. The first great plague wee read of, was that which is spoken of, *Numb. 11. 33. The wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague.* And what was the cause of that plague? Surely their murmuring and discontentment at their present condition, their unthankfulnesse to the Lord, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, *Verf. 20.* their loathing of *Manna*, *Verf. 6.* (which the Prophet for the excellencie thereof calleth *Angels food*, *Psal. 78. 25.* and the *corne and bread of heaven*, *Psal. 78. 24.* and *105. 40.*) their lusting after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and longing to bee there againe, *Num. 11. 45. Exod. 16. 3.* Secondly, another we find mentioned,

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tioned, *Numb. 14.* where, although the Lord was stayed by the prayer of *Moses* from smiting the whole congregation with the pestilence, and from disinheriting them, as hee threatned to doe, *Vers. 6.* yet of ten of those men that were sent to search out the Land, it is said *Vers. 37.* that they *died of the plague before the Lord.* And the cause of this is said to bee, *Verse 36, 37.* that they *did bring up a slander and evill report* upon the promised Land, and thereby made all the congregation to murmur against *Moses*, who had spoken so much good of it. Thirdly, another great plague, *Moses* hath set downe the story of, *Numb. 16. 49.* wherein there died *fourteene thousand and seven hundred*; and yet then so soone as *wrath was gone out from the Lord*, so soone as *the plague was begun*, as wee read, *Vers. 46, — 48.* *Aaron* (the true type of our onely High Priest, and

and effectuall Intercessor for us unto God) went with his incense, and stood betweene the dead and the living, and made an atonement for the people, and so the plague was stayed. How fearfull a pestilence would that have beene if it had continued any time, if it had not been presently stayed? And the sinne that provoked God to send this pestilence among his people, wee finde to have beene their murmuring & rebelling against *Moses* and *Aaron* the Ministers and servants of the Lord; as it is plaine by the 41. and 43. verses of that Chapter. Fourthly, the fourth memorable pestilence that wee read of, is that which is recorded, *Num. 25.* of which there fell in one day (as the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 10. 8.*) three and twenty thousand. *Moses* in setting downe that story saith, *Numb. 25. 9.* those that dyed in the plague were twenty and foure thousand;

C

putting

Serm. 1.

putting all together in that
 summe, that perished at that
 time, and for that sinne; aswell
 those whom himselfe and the
 Judges had put to death accor-
 ding to the Commandement of
 God, Vers. 4, 5. (which may
 seeme to have beene in num-
 ber about a thousand) as those
 that perished by that plague
 which the Lord (in his fierce an-
 ger as it is said Vers. 4.) did send
 amongst them, which were the
 three and twenty thousand that
 the Apostle speaketh of. For that
 most of them that then perish-
 ed, died of an extraordinary pe-
 stilence, (and not all by the
 sword of the Magistrate, as some
 learned men judge) may appeare
 by that which the Holy Ghost
 speaketh of it in other places; as
*Numb. 31. 16. There was a
 plague among the Congregation
 of the Lord: and Josh. 22. 17.*
 where the very same words are
 used by Phinahas, who had a
 chiefe hand in the staying of it:
 and

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and *Psal. 106. 29, 30.* The plague
 brake in upon them, they stood
 up *Phinehas*, & executed judg-
 ment, and so the plague was
 stayed. And what was the cause
 of this strange and fearefull pe-
 stilence that consumed in one
 day three and twenty thou-
 sand? Surely it was whoredome,
 as both *Moses Numb. 25. 1, 6.*
 and the Apostle, *1 Cor. 10. 8.* do
 expressly teach us. Fifthly, the
 fifth and last plague we read of
 in holy Scripture was in *Dauids*
 time, the story whereof is set
 downe, *2 Sam. 24. 15.* this went
 through all *Israel* from *Dan* e-
 ven to *Bearsheba* in three daies,
 and consumed in so short a time
 no lesse than *seventy thousand*
men. And the cause of this
 plague was the pride of *Dauids*
 heart, and the confidence he re-
 posed in his owne strength, and
 in the outward meanes hee had
 to defend himselfe by, and to
 provide for his owne safety. And
 besides these five great plagues,

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I find also mention made of another dangerous and strange sickness wherewithall the Lord in his just judgement did smite and afflict his people in the Church of Corinth; which though I cannot certainly say it was the pestilence, (because the text doth not expressly say so) yet I may boldly say, it was an epidemicall disease, and grievous mortality, most likely to be it. *Many are weake and sicke among you,* (saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 11. 30.) *and many sleepe,* that is, die of it. And the cause of this sickness and mortality the Apostle tells us, was this, that they came carelessly, unreverently, and without due preparation unto the holy Sacrament.

Thus you see what sins have brought the plague upon men in former times; yea upon such as have beene Gods people by profession, as well as wee. And *This happened unto them for ensample* (as the Apostle speaketh

keth, 1 Cor. 10. 11.) and all these Sermon. 1.
 ensamples are written and re-
 corded in Scripture of purpose
 for our admonition.

And although wee read of
 no plagues that are recorded in
 the holy Scriptures; but those
 that I have mentioned, and for
 those sinnes; yet finde wee di-
 vers other sinnes also which
 God hath threatned to punish
 this way. Gods people were af-
 fraid that hee would fall upon
 them, and consume them with
 the pestilence, (as we read, Exod.
 5. 3.) even for their negligence
 of his solemne worship and ser-
 vice; though they were then in
 Egypt, where they could not
 performe it without extreme
 danger. And because Pharaoh
 had despised and hardened his
 heart against former and smaller
 judgements, the Lord threat-
 neth (Exod. 9. 15.) to smite him
 & his people with the pestilence.
 To conclude, the Lord did by
 his Prophet, Jerem. 21. 5, 6.

Serm. 1. threaten in angel and fury, & in great wrath to smite the inhabitants of Jerusalem both man and beast, and that they should die of a very great pestilence; because they stood out in rebellion against the King of Babylon, and refused to yeeld unto him as God had commanded them: whereby it appeareth, that an obstinate refusing to obey the Word and Commandment of God in any thing, though it be such, as may be coloured with the best pretences, will provoke him to punish men this way.

Applic.

So then (to apply all this unto our selves) seeing it is evident that we and our nation are guilty of all these sins, for every one of which wee finde in the Word, that God hath brought and threatned to bring this judgement upon his people in former times: seeing wee have been first most unthankfull unto God for our deliverance out of that

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that spirituall Egypt, and house of bondage wherein our forefathers lived; and have shewed too much desire to returne thither againe; and have loathed so long the heavenly food of the Gospell of Christ more than ever they did that Manna: and secondly, have brought up and entertained a most slanderous and evill report of the promised Land, and of that strait way that leads unto it, speaking evill of, and scorning the life and power of godlinesse, and discouraging others from it; murmuring against, and hating (to the death) such of Gods servants, as either by doctrine, or example, do presse and provoke us unto it: and thirdly, are so ready (upon every occasion) to murmur and rebell against the servants and ministers of the Lord; content (indeed) to give them the hearing, but apt to tell them (if they shall deale particularly and roundly with us, and re-

Serm. 1.

quire of us obedience to the truth, and practise of that that we heare and professe) that they take too much upon them; seeing fourthly, whoredome doth every where so increase and abound in our Land: and fifthly, wee are every whit as proud of our owne strength, and as apt to put trust in the arme of flesh, as *David* was: and sixthly, the holy Sacrament is (in all places) so commonly prophaned, and those holy things given to and received (without difference) by such dogs and swine as have no care at all duly to prepare themselves thereunto; seeing seventhly, the publike and solemne worship of God is every where so much neglected; and eighthly, wee have so hardened our hearts against, and profited so little by many other judgments, whereby the Lord hath witnessed his wrath from heaven against us, and sought to bring us unto repentance: and ninthly,

nimbly, wee doe continually (with so great obstinacy) refuse to yeeld obedience to many of the expresse commandements of God. Sermon. I.

Seeing (I say) wee are guilty of all these sins that are the proper causes of this judgement, let us therefore impute this fearfull plague, whereby God hath smitten the chiefe City, and many other parts of our Land, unto these our sins; and justifie the Lord in this judgement, the causes whereof are so evidently to bee found amongst us; yea let us all feare that hee will execute his fierce wrath upon us in the same manner, except we repent us of, and forsake these sins. And this is the first way whereby wee must make right use unto our selves of this heauey judgment of God that is upon the Land.

The second is this, that seeing the Lord doth thus declare and proclaime that his anger and fury is kindled and infla-

Serm. i.

med against us all, it behoves us (without delay) by all meanes to make our peace with God, and to seeke reconciliati- on with him. *Acquaint thy selfe now with him* (saith Eli- phaz to Job, Chap. 22. 21.) *and make peace with him, thereby good shall come unto thee.* This, and this onely is the way unto true safety and comfort. And marke that hee adviseth him to do it *now*. Now is the time to do it, if ever we will do it, now that his hand is so stretched out a- gainst us. And wee are strangely hardened in our sinnes, if (how- soever we have wretchedly neg- lected it hitherto) we will not do it now. If any shall aske mee what must I do, and what course must I take to make my peace with God?

I answer briefly and plainly, that there bee three things thou must do, if thou wouldest obtaine peace with God: and if thou canst doe these three things,

things, thou needest not doubt to obtaine it. Sermon. 1.

First, thou must freely and fully, and particularly confesse thy finnes unto God, even those finnes which I have shewed to bee the chiefe causes of this judgement. *I said* (saith David, *Psal. 32.5.*) *I will confesse my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sinne.*

Secondly, thou must unfainedly and fully resolve with thy selfe to cast off and forsake these and all other thy finnes: *Prov. 28. 13.* *Who so confesseth and forsaketh his sin, shall finde mercy.* Though thou canst not quite leave them (as who can do that in this life?) yet if thou canst unfainedly and without dissimulation desire, and purpose, and resolve with thy selfe to leave them all, begging strength of GOD that thou mayst bee made able to doe it, then hast thou forsaken them in Gods account;

Serm. I.

account; and they shall not hinder thy peace and reconciliation with God. In this *David* tooke comfort. *I am purposed*, (saith he, *Psal.* 17. 3.) *that my mouth shall not transgresse*: and *Psal.* 39. 1. *I said* (I fully resolved and determined with myself) *I will take heed to my waies*.

Thirdly, and lastly, thou must strive (by a lively faith) to lay hold on Gods mercy in Christ, and to get his blood sprinkled upon thy heart. Christ is *our peace*, as the Apostle calls him, *Eph.* 2. 14. Neither can we (with all that wee are able to do) make our peace with God, but onely through faith in him. When the destroying Angell saw the blood of the lambe sprinkled upon the lintell and side-posts of any doore, hee passed by that house, and smote none in it, *Exod.* 12. 23.

The third way whereby we must make right use to our selves of this judgement that wee

Serm. 1.

wee see upon others, is this: it must increase our care to reform (not our selves only, but) our families. It is a vain thing for any man to blesse himselfe or take comfort in his repentance without this care; say not, if I use all good meanes to make peace with God for my selfe, I hope the faults of my family shall never be imputed unto me. Search the Scriptures, and you shall finde there was never any man that was himselfe reconciled and at peace with God, but his care was, that his familie might feare God, and bee in favour with him, as well as himselfe. *Cornelius* (though he were a Centurion, and kept a great familie; and had souldiers to serve him, yet) *feared God with all his house*, *Act. 10. 2*. So soone as *Zacheus* himself was become a sonne of *Abraham* (a true believer) *salvation came unto his house too*, *Luk. 19. 9*. Christ promised he should have a faithfull
and

Serm. 1.

and a religious family. So speaketh *Eliphaz* also to *Job*, *Job* 22. 23. *If thou returne to the Almighty, thou shalt bee built up, thou shalt put away iniquity farre from thy tabernacles.* No man that is himselfe truly returned unto the Almighty, need to be discouraged in this ; if he do his endeavour, God hath promised, that he shall bee able (through his gracious assistance and blessing) to reforme his family ; though not to convert the heart of every one in it, yet to keepe them from open and scandalous offences. Certainly we do not make the right use we ought, of this heavie scourge of God, unlesse wee be made thereby more carefull to reforme our families. For this cause the Lord said he would not conceale from *Abraham* his purpose against the *Sodomites*, because hee knew that he would make this use of it. *For I know him* (saith the Lord, *Gen.* 18. 19.)
that

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that he will command his children, and his household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which hee hath spoken of him. First, Abraham (upon the knowledge and observation of Gods wrath even upon the Sodomites) would become more carefull to looke to his whole family, and to reforme it. Secondly, God would assist and blesse him in this his endeavour, and hee should see the fruit of it in his familie. Thirdly, this care that Abraham had of his family should bee a principall meanes to make good unto him all Gods promises, to bring upon him, and make sure unto him all the blessings and good things that God had promised unto him, and without this hee could have had no assurance of them.

O that wee could once believe and take to heart these things.

Applic.

Serm. I.

things. Certainly one main cause of this, and all other judgements that are upon our Land, is the want of care that is in them that professe themselves to bee the people of God, in reforming their families: whether they of their family bee drunkards, or sober persons; blasphemers, or such as feare an oath; uncleane, or chaste; prophane, or religious, is all one to them.

The fourth and last way whereby wee must make right use to our selves of this judgement, is this: it must make us more mercifull to them that are in distresse, and more ready to relieve them. Nothing will give us more assurance to bee freed from the plague our selves, or to find comfort and strength in it, if God shall please to visit us by it, than this. When Gods hea-
vie hand did hang over *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Daniel* speakes thus unto him, *Dan. 4. 27. Wherefore Oh King, let my counsell be*

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bee acceptable unto thee, and breake off thy sinnes by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy unto the poore; if it may be a lengthening to thy tranquility. As if hee should have said, If any will lengthen thy tranquility, and keepe off the judgement threatned, this is likely to do it. Remember what our blessed Saviour hath said of this, *Mat. 5. 7. Blessed are the mercifull, for they shall obtaine mercy.* Nothing will give a man more assurance to finde mercy with God in the time of his distresse, than this will. Remember also what his holy Apostle saith of this, *Jam. 2. 13. He shall have judgement without mercy, that sheweth no mercy.* If either the plague or any other judgement seize upon that man that hath been void of mercy, it shall bee upon him without all mixture of mercy, hee shall have no comfort of Gods mercy in it; & mercy rejoyceth (or boasteth) against

Sermon. I. *against judgement.* The mercifull man shall not feare this or any other judgement before it come, as other men do: and if it doe light upon him, hee shall rejoyce, and find a comfortable sense of Gods mercy in it. And remember this at this time especially, now you have kept a day of humbling your selves before God; know that there is nothing that will more grace our solemne services before God, (specially services of this kind) nothing will make them more acceptable unto him, than when wee shall therein manifest and declare our selves to bee mercifull and bountifull unto the poore. *Is not this the fast that I have chosen* (saith the Lord, *Esay 58. 6, 7.*) *to loose the bands of wickednesse, to undoe the heauie burthens and to let the oppressed goe free, and that yee breake every yoke? Is it not to deale thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the*

the poore that are cast out to
thine house? When thou seest
the naked that thou cover him,
and that thou hide not thy
selfe from thine
owne flesh?

Serm. 1.

SERMON

the power that are cast out to
shine house: I when then (cast
the naked that that ever was
and that thou did not the
less from them
we shall

MONDAY



SERMON II.

AUGUST XVII.

MDCXXV.



Followeth the duty
whereby *David* ex-
pressed his love and
compassion to these
men; Hee prayed for them. For,
though this be not expressed in
the first part of the verse where
the duty is mentioned that hee
performed towards these men
in their misery, yet is it evident,
first, by the expresse words of
the last clause of the verse,
where hee mentioneth the suc-
cesse he had in the duty he per-
formed for them: and secondly,
by this also that he saith hee fa-
sted and humbled his soule for
them: for, in all fasts and exer-
cises of humiliation that Gods
people

Note 2.

Serm. 2.

people have kept, prayer was the chiefe duty they performed; and aliother things they did in those exercises, they did onely to helpe and further themselves in prayer: *Esay 58.3. To make their voyce to be heard on high:* and *Jon. 3. 8. to make them cry more mightily unto God.* The Doctrine then that wee are to learne from this example of *David* is this,

Doct. 2.

That a chiefe duty we are to perform to them that are in misery, is to pray for them. See the prooffe of the point in five degrees.

First, this is a chiefe dutie whereby wee doe expresse the truth of our love unto any, and whereby wee may doe them good. When our Saviour had commanded us to *love our enemies, and to doe good to them that hate us, Matt. 5. 44.* hee addes, *And pray for them.*

Secondly, this is a duty that is to bee performed by us towards

wards all men, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1. yea even towards the wickedest men that live upon earth: See how importunate *Abraham* was with God for the beastly Sodomites, *Gen.* 18. 31.

Thirdly, this duty is to be performed specially for such as are Gods people, though it be but in outward profession. This course *Moses* tooke to relieve *Israel* in a great extremity. When God threatened he would destroy *Israel*, *Moses* stood before him in the breach, (by maine force to keepe him out) to turne away his wrath, *Psal.* 106. 23. How stood hee in the breach? How did hee turne away Gods wrath from them? By prayer: *Exod.* 32. 11. *Moses* besought the Lord his God. This course *David* tooke to relieve Gods people in the time of a fearfull pestilence, that in a short time had consumed seventy thousand, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15. Hee was deeply affected with their misery,

Serm. 2.

(as appeareth by the story)
 but what course tooke hee to
 helpe them? he prayed for them,
1 Chron. 21. 16, 17, 18. and so
 stayed the plague: So did *Mo-*
ses in the very like case of the
 pestilence; when *wrath* was
 gone out from the Lord, and the
 plague was begun, he chargeth
Aaron to take his censer, and
 put fire therein from the Altar,
 and put incense on it, and goe
 quickly to the Congregation, to
 make an atonement for them,
Num. 16. 46. True it is, that sig-
 nified the intercession of Christ
 for the people, which indeed is
 that that did the deed: but
 know, first, that when incense
 was offered, Gods people also
 prayed, *Luk. 1. 10.* and second-
 ly, that Christs intercession go-
 eth with our prayers also, and is
 that that makes them effectually.
Hee offereth his incense with
the prayers of all Saints, Rev.
8. 3.

Fourthly, in strange and ex-
 traordinary

Serm. 2.

traordinary judgements that are upon Gods people, wee are bound not onely to pray for them, but to doe it in an extraordinary manner. When the decree was sealed for the destruction of all the Jewes, and *Ester* resolved to venture her life for the revoking of it, then ordinary prayer would not serve the turne; but *Ester* commanded extraordinary prayer to bee used in such a case, and that for sundry dayes together: *Ester* 4.16. *Goe, fast yee for mee, and neither eate nor drink three dayes, night nor day.*

Fifthly, in publike & generall calamities that are upon Gods people, or hang over them, publike and generall praers should be used for them. This course *Jehosaphat* tooke in that case: *2 Chron.* 20.13. *All Juda stood before the Lord* in that fast. And so did the *Ninivites* likewise: *Jon.* 3.5. *They proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the*

D greatest

Serm. 2. *greatest of them to the least of them.* And the more publike and solemne the prayers are, that are made in this case, the more pleasing they are unto the Lord. This appeareth, *Judg. 10. 26.* they had before gone up to the house of God, and asked counsell of God, *Verf. 18.* they had gone up the second time to seeke the Lord, and then did weepe also before the Lord, *Verf. 23.* but prevailed not: the third time they prevailed. Why? What did they more now than they did before? First, they fasted. Secondly, *All the children of Israel, and all the people went up.* An evident prooffe of this, that when Gods judgments are publike and generall upon Gods people, our prayers and humiliations should bee as publike and generall as is possible: and the more publike, the more pleasing unto God.

Reason
1.

Reason. First, the Lord is hee that both layeth the judgement
upon n

Sern. 2.

upon any of our brethren, and he that must take it off, and therefore the best way wee have to helpe them, is to seeke to him in their behalfe. It is the Lord that sends the pestilence: *I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt*, saith the Lord, *Amos 4.10.* And it is he, and hee onely that moderates and sets bounds unto it. He saith to it as to the sea, *Job 38. 11.*

Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. Hee hath set downe in his counsell and decree, whom it shall smite, and whom it shall spare. The just number that he hath appointed shall die of it, use they what meanes they can (which they are bound to doe, because this is a secret unto them) to avoid it.

Jer. 15. 2. Such as are for death, (that is, for the pestilence, as it is expounded, *Jer. 31. 7.*) *to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as*

D 2

are

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are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity. And it shall not touch any of them whom he will have to be spared, though they live in never so much danger: *Pf. 91. 7. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee.* And it is the Lord onely that removes it when he pleaseth, that saith to the destroying Angel, *It is enough, stay now thy hand,* *2 Sam. 24. 16.* And lastly, it is he only that can cure those that are smitten with it: *1 Sam. 2. 6. The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth downe to the grave, and brings up againe.* So that, to conclude this reason, we may say with the Prophet, *Amos 3. 6. Shall there bee evill in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* The plague is in the City, and that is one great evill: secondly, it increaseth there wonderfully, that is another evill: thirdly, the people

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people in the out-parishes will not bee restrained, nor kept in, that is another evill: fourthly, many perish with famine, that is another evill. And hath not the Lord done all this? What better course then can we take for their good, than to seeke to the Lord for them?

Secondly, the Lord hath commanded us to doe this; hee desires and lookes for this at our hands, and is highly pleased with it, when wee (seeing his judgements upon our brethren) become suiters to him in their behalfe. Hee hath commanded, *1 Tim. 2.1. Before all things, let supplications, &c. bee made for all men.* Yea he desires it greatly, and lookes for it, even when he is most offended with a people, to bee thus sought unto in their behalfe: *Eze. 22.30. I sought for a man amongst them that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it:*

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Esa.

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Esa. 59. 16. Hee wondred that there was no intercessour; yea hee is highly pleased with this: in which respect Jeremy desires God to take notice of this grace in him, and remember it: Jer. 18. 20. Remember that I stood before thee to speake good for them, and to turne away thy wrath from them. So that it is a sinne against God to neglect this duty unto our brethren. 1 Sam. 12. 23. God forbid that I should sinne against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you.

3.

Thirdly, the force and efficacy that there is in the prayers of Gods people to helpe and relieve them that are in miserie, is very great. The prayers of Gods people have prevailed wonderfully with him, even for wicked men. How oft did *Moses* prayer remove Gods plagues even from *Pharaoh*? *Exod. 8. 13, 31. 9. 33. 10. 18, 19.* When *Ahab* and his land were almost consumed with a drought and famine,

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famine, *Elia's* prayer delivered him from that judgement, and brought raine; yet he was a *man subject to the like passions that we are*, *Jam. 5. 17, 18*. Yea in this very judgement of the pestilence yee shall see the force of prayer. For when God hath drawne out this terrible sword of his in his fierce displeasure, and consumed many by it, and stretched out his arme to smite more, the prayers of Gods people have even stayed him, and held his hand, and prevailed so with him, that they have even overcome him, and compelled him to change his mind, and put up his sword. When *wrath was gone out from the Lord*, and the plague was begun, *Aaron stood with his incense betweene the dead and the living*, and the plague was stayed, *Numb. 16. 48*. When God had said unto *Moses* (against Israel for their idolatry) *Exod. 32. 10. Let mee alone, that my*

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wrath may waxe hot against them, and that I may consume them; upon Moses prayer, vers. 14. the Lord repenteth him of the evill which he thought to doe unto his people. The like hee did upon Davids prayer, 2 Sam. 24. 16. The Lord repented him of the evill, and said to the Angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. Is it in the power of man to overcome God, to withstand him when hee comes to take vengeance, to cause him to change his mind? Yes verily; Jacob had that power, Gen. 32. 26. when the Lord had wrestled with him, and said, Let me goe; hee would not let him goe: but Verse 28. as a Prince hee had power with God, and prevailed. And how did he overcome God thus? By prayer, as you may see, Hos. 12. 4. Hee had power over the Angel, and prevailed; hee wept and made supplication unto him. Say not, those were rare men; for all Gods

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Gods people have this name given them, they are all called *the Israel of God*, Gal. 6. 16. and therefore (as Princes) may prevaile with God this way. And no marvell, though Gods people may thus prevaile with God for the staying of his hand in temporall judgements, or removing of them from their brethren, seeing they are able to prevaile with God even for the pardon of their sinnes which are the causes of those judgements, and for the converting and saving of their soules: *Jam. 5. 15. The prayer of faith shall save the sicke, and if hee have committed sinnes, they shall bee forgiven him.* And *1 Joh. 5. 16. If any man see his brother sinne a sinne which is not unto death, he shall aske, and hee shall give him life for them that sinne not unto death.*

The Use this { Instruction.
 Doctrine serves { Reproofe.
 unto, is for { Examination.

D 5

First,

Serm. 2.

First, for instruction. To teach us what account is to be made of such as are true Israelites. And know thou hast two reasons to move thee to make much of such.

First, they are a blessing to the place where they live : *Esa. 19. 24. Israel shall be a blessing in the midst of the land.* They are the props and pillars of the Land ; for their sakes the land is spared. If there had been but ten such in Sodome, Sodome had been spared, *Gen. 18. 32.*

Secondly, they are able (as Princes) to prevaile mightily with God, by their prayers ; to stand in the breach, and to hold Gods hands : they are *the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof*, as they are called, *2 King. 13. 14.* Indeed there are but a few such true Israelites ; which makes the Prophet speake in that manner, *Psalms. 25. 12. What man is hee that feareth the Lord ?* But where thou knowest

knowest such, make much of them. Why should not Gods favourites be as much honoured, as the favourites of the greatest King? Get as many such into the town thou livest in, as thou canst. They are as *Lots* in Sodom: *Gen. 19. 22.* till *Lot* was gone out of Sodom, the Angell could not destroy it. Get as many such into thy family as thou canst, as *David* professed hee would doe: *Psal. 101. 6.* Mine eyes shall bee upon the faithfull in the Land, that they may dwell with mee. *Gen. 39. 5.* The Lord blessed the Egyptians house for *Josephs* sake. Get such friends as these are. *Psal. 119. 63.* I am a companion of all them that feare thee. *Vers. 79.* Let those that feare thee turne unto mee, and those that have knowne thy testimonies. I tell thee, *Paul* (as great an Apostle as he was) knew how to esteeme and make use of such friends: *Rom. 15. 30.* Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord

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Lord Iesus Christs sake, and for the love of the spirit, that you strive together with mee in your prayers to God for mee.

I know I shall offend many of you in speaking so much for such, whom (above all others) you detest most, and are ready to shew it upon every occasion. And I have wondred much to see the bitter hatred that many (who are otherwise civill men) beare to such as feare God. For thinke I, as it is *Psal. 11. 3. What can the righteous doe?* But I have found in Gods Booke the true cause of it, and that is this; that every naturall man hateth God, and is an enemy to him, *Rom. 5. 10.* and that God hath put enmity betweene the seede of the serpent, and the seede of the woman, *Gen. 3. 15.* and therefore, so long as thou continuest an enemy unto God, and one of the serpents seede; thou must needs hate all such as truly feare God. The good Lord be

bee mercifull to thee, and give thee an heart to take notice of thy wretched estate, that thou maist repent and come out of it.

Serm. 2.

The second Use is for reproofe of three sorts of men: first, of them that cannot pray: secondly, of them that doe not use to pray: thirdly, of them that will not pray.

Use 2.

First, of them that cannot pray. O consider how miserable a man thou art. First, thou wantest that whereby thou shouldest helpe thy poore brethren in their misery. A grieve it is to an honest mind, to see his brother in extreme want and miserie, and hee hath nothing to relieve him with. Therefore is that commandement given, *Eph. 4. 28. Let him labour in some honest calling, that hee may have to give.* How much more just cause of grieve is this, when thou canst not so much as pray for him? Secondly, thou wantest that whereby thou shouldest keepe off
Gods

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Gods judgments from thy selfe, or remove them, or yeeld thee comfort in them. *For my love they were mine adversaries,* (saith David, *Psal. 109. 4.*) *but I gave my selfe to prayer.* That was his chiefe comfort in all his afflictions. Thirdly, thou wanst that that should give thee comfort in thy present estate. For thou canst have no assurance that thou art Gods child, or that thou hast any truth of grace in thee, if thou cannot pray. The spirit of grace is the *spirit of supplication*, *Zac. 12. 10.* *Because yet are sonnes* (saith the Apostle, *Gal. 4. 6.*) *God hath sent forth the spirit of his Sonne into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.* No man is the child of God, nor hath the spirit of Christ in him, that is not able feelingly and fervently to call God Father, and to pray unto him. Learne therefore to cry earnestly unto God, as the Disciples did,

Luk.

Luk. 11. 1. Lord teach me to pray.

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The second sort that are to be reproved by this Doctrine, are such as can, but (through laziness and profane negligence) doe not use to pray. Many there bee that seldome or never pray; it may bee in their sickness, or extreme danger they will, but they beare upon them that brand of an hypocrite that *Job* speaketh of, *Job. 27. 10. Will hee call upon God at all times?* that is, constantly, and not by fits and starts onely. Many that did once use constantly to pray with their families, and in secret, have now given it over. To whom the Lord will one day say, as *Esa. 43. 22. Thou hast not called upon mee, O Jacob, but thou hast beene weary of mee, O Israel.* They that neglect their calling upon God, and are weary of prayer, are weary of God. Many never powred out prayer to God for our armies, nor for our brethren

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brethren visited with the plague: the most of us have neglected it too long, to seeke to God for them in this extraordinary maner. *Goe quickly with thy censer, the plague is begun,* saith *Moses to Aaron, Numb. 16.46.* so soone as the plague did begin, we should without delay have importuned the Lord for our brethren. Unto these I will say but two words; first, that God may justly impute to thee the blood both of our souldiers that died so miserably, and of the many thousands that have perished by the plague, because thou hast not striven by thy prayers with God for them: according to that rule of our Saviour, *Mar. 3.4.* He that useth not meanes to save life when it lieth in his power, is a murderrer. Secondly, that this neglecting of prayer is a dangerous signe that thou hast no feare of God in thee. *Thou castest off feare* (saith *Elephaz, Job 15.4*) *and restrainest*

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nest prayer before God. It is a signe thou beleevest not Gods providence. *The foole hath said in his heart, There is no God,* (saith the Prophet, *Psal. 14. 1.*) and one argument to prove this, he gives *Verf. 4. They call not upon the Lord.* Lastly, this is a signe that thou hast no comfort at all in God, no assurance of his favour. *Will the hypocrite* (saith *Job, Chap. 27. 10.*) *delight himselfe in the Almighty? will he alwayes call upon God?* The cause why men keepe not a constant course in prayer, is because they have no delight nor comfort in God. O let us therefore make conscience of this duty to pray, and to pray constantly; praying alwayes, as the Apostle requires, *Eph. 6. 18. & 1 Thess. 5. 16. Pray without ceasing,* not giving over so good and necessary a duty, when wee have once begun to take it up.

The third sort of them whom this Doctrin reproveth, are such

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such as (through profanenesse or worldlinesse) will not pray. Though the State have first enjoined us to keep these daies of humiliation; and secondly, gone before us in it themselves; and thirdly, published for our helpe a booke of prayers, as ample, holy, effectuell, and fit for the present occasion, as ever were in any Liturgie that I have scene; (for all which wee are greatly bound to praise the Lord) yet will they not upon these dayes lend their helpe to their distressed brethren, nor joyne with us in prayer for them. These men certainly are of the minde either of those profane worldlings, that say, as *Job 21. 15.* *What profit shall wee have if wee pray unto him?* Can wee get in our harvest, or provide for our families by comming to Church, and joyning with you in prayer? Or will our praying keepe away the plague from us? Or else they are of the minde of those desperate Atheists

Atheists that said, *Esa. 22. 13.* Sermon. 2.

Let us eate and drinke; for to morrow we shall die. This plague increaseth strangely, and is like enough to reach unto us; let us therefore while wee live be merry, and make as much of our selves as we can. I grant, every man is not fit to keepe a fast every weeke, specially in this time of harvest; neither did the State intend to enioyne him to doe it: but not to joyne with Gods people sometimes in this duty, specially on these solemn dayes of humiliation, is, first, a great sinne against our distressed brethren, for whom our prayers would the more prevaile, the more generall they were, and the more of us did joyne together in them, as I have proved before out of *2 Chron. 20. 13.* Secondly, a matter of great danger to themselves, as that which will provoke Gods displeasure against them. *Levit. 23. 29.* *Whatsoever soule*

Serm. 2. *soule it bee that shall not be afflicted in that same day* (that the congregation kept their fast on) *bee shall bee cut off from among his people.* In which respects God commanded them to keepe it in all their dwellings, *Levit. 23. 3.* And *Zeph. 1. 6.* the Lord threatneth to stretch out his hand against, and to cut off them *that have not sought the Lord*; then much more such as refuse to doe it, being thus called, and provoked thereunto.

Use 3.

The third & last Use is for examination whether our prayers heretofore have been, or now be such, so powerfull & effectuell as have been described in this Doctrine; whether we be such Israelites as (like Princes) have prevailed with God in them. Gods children should enquire after their prayers how they speed. *David* praieeth oft for an answer, *Pf. 143. 1.* *In thy faithfulness answer me:* and protesteth it would be a death to him to find God silent

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lent to his prayers, *Pf. 28. 1.* And what answer hath God given to our prayers? First, we have prayed for the good successe of our armies against the enemies of the Gospel. But the enimie hath still prevailed, so that wee may complaine, as *Psal. 44. 9, 10, 12.* *Thou hast cast off, and put us to shame, and goest not forth with our armies; thou makest us turne backe from the enimie, and they which hate us spoyle for themselves: thou sellest thy people for nought, and dost not increase thy wealth by their price.* Secondly, we have prayed for the good successe of our Parliament, that the King, and Nobles, and Commons might agree together (as one man) for the setting of Gods Arke & Religion among us, as they did in *Salomons* time, *1 King. 8. 1.* But the Parliament (for all our prayers) hath received such an end, as every good heart hath cause to lament. Thirdly, wee have prayed

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prayed unto God to stay his hand in the noysome pestilence. When *Aaron* stood with his incense betweene the living and the dead, the plague ceased, *Numb.* 16. 48. and *Dauids* prayer stayed the plague, *2 Chro.* 21. 17, 18. Our *Dauids*, and our *Aarons*, and the whole Land, have oft prayed against this judgement, and ever since wee began to pray, the plague hath increased wonderfully: so that wee may complaine with the Church, *Lam.* 3. 8. *When I cry and shout he shutteth out my prayer.* And *Psal.* 80. 4. *O Lord God of Hostes, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?* What is the cause of this? I answer, surely (though there may be other causes) yet this is the chiefe, *Jam.* 4. 3. *Wee have asked, and have not received, because wee have asked amisse.* And that wee may the better discerne, what hath beene amisse in our prayers, I will shew you

you how those prayers should be qualified that shall prevaile with God.

Serm. 2.

First, we must pray fervently and importunately, as they that will receive no nay in their suits.

The effectuall fervent prayer of a righteous man (saith the Apostle, *Jam. 5. 16.*) *availeth much.*

The prayer of the most righteous man that is, cannot be effectuall, nor availe much, unlesse it be fervent. And to such prayer onely is the promise made: *Jer.*

29. 13. Yee shall seeke for mee, and finde mee, when yee shall search for mee with all your heart. The want of this fervencie in prayer the Prophet complaineth of, as of the chiefe cause why God did hide his face from his people, and consumed them with his judgements:

Esa. 64. 7. There is none that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth up himselfe to take hold of thee. By prayer the faithfull may as it were take hold on

God,

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God, they may hold his hands from striking them, as *Moses* did when God said to him, *Exo. 32. 10. Let mee alone.* But none doth thus effectually call upon God, and take hold of him, that prayeth coldly and drowfily, but hee onely *that stirreth up*, and rowseth himself unto this duty, that hee may doe it fervently. And surely this may bee one cause why God hath given no better answer to our prayers hitherto, because hee seeth how cold and drowfie we have beene in them, how little affected we have beene with the miseries of our brethren, whom wee have seemed to pray for. When our blessed Saviour was in his agony, and his soule was exceeding sorrowfull, even unto death, *Matth. 26. 38.* his disciples *Peter*, and *James*, and *John*, whom he desired to watch with him, and to bee some helpe to him in that his distresse, fell asleepe; so little sense had they
of

of his extreme miserie, *Matth.* Sermon. 2.

26.40. And even so have we carried our selves towards our brethren, the members of Christ; we have pretended a willingness to yeeld them our helpe in the miseries they are in, but alas in the prayers that we have seemed to make for them, we have beene overtaken with drowfinesse and sleepinesse, wee have beene in them little or nothing at all touched with the sense of their distresse. But as our Saviour said then unto those his Disciples, *Matth.* 26. 41. *Watch and pray:* So say I unto you, beloved, you can never doe your selves or your brethren good by your prayers, unlesse when you pray you watch, and looke well to your hearts, to keepe them from drowfinesse and senselesnesse, from wandring and roving, that when you pray, you may pray with fervencie, and feeling of our owne necessities, and of the necessities of
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Sermon 2. them that you doe pray for. Let us not thinke that (because we see no better fruit of our prayers) the Lord hath beene displeased with us for keeping these fasts, and presuming to become suitors to him for our brethren: but let us rather judge, that hee hath therefore delayed to answer us hitherto, that hee might cause us hereby to cry lowder, and to be more importunate and fervent with him in our prayers. For so dealt he with the good woman of Canaan, *Math. 23. 22, 24, 26*. Hee did not onely delay to helpe her, but by his neglecting of her, and the rough answers he gave her, seemed angry with her, and willing to discourage her, not out of any dislike hee had to her or her suite, (wherewith doubtlesse he was much pleased) but onely to increase her fervencie and importunity in prayer.

Secondly, wee must pray in faith & confidence to be heard.

Let

Serm. 2.

Let him aske in faith (saith the Apostle, *Jam. 1. 6, 7.*) else let him not thinke that hee shall receive any thing of the Lord. And surely we have just cause to pray in faith and confidence that we shall prevaile with God in these prayers that wee make for our distressed brethren. Many good grounds of confidence wee have:

First, we have heard that it is the will and commandement of God that wee should pray for them. *And this is the confidence that wee have in him* (saith the Apostle *1 Joh. 5. 14.*) *that if we aske any thing according to his will, he heareth us.*

Secondly, these extraordinary prayers and fasts that we keepe, are injoynd us by publike authority of our gracious Sovereigne, and of the State. And even that is a thing highly pleasing unto God, and will much further the successe of our prayers. Therefore also it is men-

Serm. 2. tioned by the Holy Ghost as a matter of no small importance, in two of the most successfull fasts; that is, in that of *Judah*, *2 Chron. 20. 3.* *Jehosaphat feared, and set himselfe to seeke the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah:* and in that of the *Ninivites*, *Jon. 3. 7.* *He caused it to bee proclaimed and published through Niniveh, (by the decree of the King and his Nobles) saying, —*

Thirdly, these fasts are kept generally, & every where throughout the Land; and that is also a thing that God is much pleased with: such prayers and daies of humiliation that have beene so universall, have been wont much to prevaile with God: as wee have already heard out of *Judg. 20. 26.* and *2 Chron. 20. 3, 13.* and *Jon. 3. 5, 7, 8.*

Fourthly, the nation and people that we pray for, are Gods owne people, and such as beare his Name. Admit our Land be as
sinfull

Serm. 2.

sinfull as Sodome was, yet remember that if there had beene but ten such in *Sodom*, as wee have many thousands of in our Land, God had heard *Abrahams* prayer even for Sodome, because of them, *Gen.* 18. 32. Of our Land (blessed be God) we may yet say there in no Nation in the world at this day, that hath so many righteous persons in it, or that hath the Gospell preached in it in that sincerity and power as we have. Nay, there is no City in the world where the Gospell is so plentifully and so faithfully preached, nor wherein God is so purely worshipped, as in that City that we meet together this day to pray for. And what an encouragement that may be unto us in our prayers, is plain by that speech of the Prophet in his prayer unto God for *Judah*, *Jer.* 14. 9. *Yet thou O Lord art in the midst of us, and wee are called by thy Name, leave us not.*

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Serm. 2.

And this must bee acknowledged for another cause why our prayers hitherto have speed no better, wee have not prayed in faith. Many have joyned with us, whose persons God never yet accepted, or was well pleased with. And till God have respect to *Abel* himselfe, hee will never have respect to any offering of his, *Gen. 4. 4*. And such of us as are in the state of grace, yet have wee not stirred up our faith, and confidence to speed, in the prayers wee have made. Do it hereafter, and thou shalt be sure to speed the better in thy prayers for it. Say unto thy soule when thou preparest thy selfe to pray, as *David* did, *Psal. 42. 11*. *Why art thou cast downe, O my soule? and why art thou disquieted within mee? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.* Put thy confidence in God, hope and expect to receive a gracious

gracious answer from him when thou prayest unto him, and thou shalt finde better successe in thy prayers than thou hast beene wont to doe. Serm. 2.

Thirdly, we must pray in sense of our owne unworthinesse; no man is fit to pray for Gods people, but hee that feeles *the plague of his owne heart*, as *Solomon* speaketh 1 *King*. 8. 38.

But how can that bee? (will you say) if I have when I pray a deepe apprehension and sense of mine owne unworthinesse and sinne, how can I bee importunate with God in my prayer? how can I pray in faith, or bee confident that hee will heare mee? This must needs deprive a man of all boldnesse, discourage and make him afraid to speake unto God. This effect the sense of sinne seemes to have had in *David*, when hee cryed *Psal.* 40. 12. *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon mee, so that I am not able to looke up:*

Serm. 2. *they are more than the haire of mine head, therefore mine heart faileth mee.*

But to this I answer, that no faithfull man hath cause to feare this. For Gods people have never beene so strong with him in prayer, as when they were most abased and dejected in themselves, in sense of their owne weaknesse and unworthinesse. *When I am weake* (saith the Apostle 2 Cor. 12.10. weake, and dejected in my selfe through sense of mine owne infirmities and afflictions) *then am I strong:* strong in the Lord, and fittest to doe him service in an acceptable manner. See an example and type of this in *Jacob*, Gen. 32.25, 26. Never was hee so strong with God, as when the hollow of his thigh was out of joynt. *Hee had power over the Angel* (over Christ the Angel of the Covenant, saith the Prophet, Hos. 12.4.) *and prevailed.* *He wept and made supplication unto*

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unto him, hee found him in Bethel. Why wept he so? Certainly from the sense of his owne infirmitie and unworthinesse: but he prevaileth with God in his supplications neverthelesse, but much the more for that. See this also in the good woman of Canaan; do you not thinke she was much abased in her selfe upon those three repulses that shee had received? *Matt. 15. 27.* yet was her prayer then most strong and effectually with God, verse 28. And this is surely another cause, why our prayers for our brethren have beene so weake, and without force with God; wee are too strong, too well perswaded of our selves, to doe Gods people any good with our prayers.

Fourthly, wee must bring with us unto prayer an unfained desire, and a full purpose and resolution of heart to reforme that that is amisse both in our selves and others, and so to re-

Serm. 2. move the cause of Gods displeasure that is kindled against us. Certainly this would give wonderfull force unto our prayers: this was that that gave such force unto the fasting and praying of the Ninivites, *Jon. 3.* See their care and desire: *Let them turne every one from his evill way,* (say the King and Nobles in their proclamation, *vers. 8.*) *and from the violence that is in their hands.* See also both the performance of that they resolved to doe, and how nothing so much prevailed with God for the successe of their prayers as this: *vers. 10.* *God saw their workes, that they turned from their evill way, and God repented of the evill that he had said hee would doe unto them, and he did it not.* Therefore hath it bene usuall with Gods people in their solemne fasts, not onely to make full and particular confession of their finnes; but also to vow unto God that

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that they would leave and forsake them; yea they were wont solemnly to bind themselves unto this. All this is evident, *Neh.* 9. 12, 38. and 10. 29. *When Phinehas stood up and executed judgement* (upon *Zimri* and *Cozbi*, as *Moses* and the Judges had before done of many others that were joyned unto *Baal-Peor*, *Num.* 25. 4, 5. and so removed the cause of Gods displeasure) *the plague was stayed*, saith the Prophet, *Psal.* 106. 30. All the weeping of the whole congregation before the doore of the tabernacle (of which wee read *Numb.* 25. 6.) could doe nothing without that. O that God would put into the hearts of all our Magistrates, not onely to appoint and keep solemn and generall fasts, but also (by severe execution of the lawes) to remove the causes of all our plagues. Our King and State (blessed bee God) have made good Lawes against idolatrie, swearing,

Serm. 2. swearing, prophanation of the Sabbath, murther and drunkenness; but (alas) we want such as *Phinehas*, to see the lawes executed upon any of these offenders; and therefore it is no marvell though the plague bee not stayed. While these foule sins are winked at, and goe unpunished, what hope can we have that either our owne prayers or the prayers of all the Saints upon earth, should prevaile with God for our Land? Till the *Achans* bee found out and punished, as found they may easily be, for *they do every where declare their sinne as Sodom, they hide it not*, (as the Prophet speaketh, *Esa. 3. 9.*) but till they bee punished, as God did say to *Joshua, Chap. 7. 10, 11. Get thee up, wherefore lyeest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned; so will hee to us: why doe you thus fast, and pray, and make such shew of humiliation as you do? find out the*

the sins, and punish them that are the causes of mine anger, and then I will bee appealed toward you and your Land.

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Certainly one chiefe cause why our fasting and praying hath done so little good, is because this hath not beene done. Nay, many of these lewd men, that are guilty of these foule sinnes, intrude themselves into our assemblies, and joyne with us in these holy duties. And we know that *the sacrifice of the wicked is abomination unto the Lord, Prov. 15. 8.* Let me therefore exhort you (beloved) that as you desire to please God in this profession of humiliation that you make, and to benefit your selves or your brethren by your prayers; resolve both to forsake every knowne sinne, and vow unto God this day amendment of life, in such particulars as thine owne heart can tell thee thou hast most offended God by; (and which of us all
is

Serm. 2. is it that hath not something to reforme?) remembre alwaies that speech of the Prophet, *Psal. 66. 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not heare mee*; as also secondly, to do what lies in thee to reforme others.

Fifthly and lastly, Wee must joyne workes of mercy with our prayers. First, let no man thinke he shall bee a loser by that that he gives (out of conscience towards God) unto the poore. *He that hath pitty upon the poore, lendeth unto the Lord* (saith the Holy Ghost, *Prov. 19. 17.*) and *that that he hath given, will he pay him againe*. Secondly, Of all almes that is given, that is best and most pleasing unto God, that is given in our Church assemblies: for it is an ordinance of God (and even a Sabbath duty) that collection should be made for the poore when we meete together, as is plaine by that speech of the Apostle,
1 Cor.

1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. And of that that is thus given, you may have much more assurance, that it shall bee given unto them only that have need, than you can have of much of that that you give at your doores. Thirdly, there is great force in this worke of mercy to further the good successe of our prayers: else would not the Angel have said thus unto *Cornelius*, *Act. 10. 4* *Thy prayers and thine almes are come up for a memoriall before God.* His almes-deeds made his prayers more availeable before God, than otherwise they would have beene.

Serm. 2.

SERMON.

THE [illegible] OF [illegible]

BY [illegible]

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SERMON III.

SEPTEMBER. VII.

MDCXXV.



He two first points observed in this verse wee have already dispatched: that is, first, the time wherein hee shewed his kindnesse unto them, and the occasion he tooke to do it, *when they were sicke*: secondly, the duty and meanes whereby hee expressed his kindnesse unto them; he prayed in an extraordinary manner for them. Now this extraordinary prayer hee made for them is set forth, first, by the outward and bodily helps hee used in this prayer; secondly, by the inward disposition of his mind and heart in it.

The

Serm. 3.

The outward and bodily helps he used in this his prayer were two, the clothing of himselfe with sackcloth, and fasting. For the first of these, we shall finde it was much used by Gods people in their extraordinary prayers: *Neh. 9. 1. The children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them: and Jon. 3. 5. The people of Niniveh proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even unto the least of them. Yea the Lord himselfe sometimes commanded them to doe so: Esa. 22. 12. The Lord God of hostes called them to girding with sackcloth. Joel 1. 13. Lie all night in sackcloth ye Ministers of my God.* And least you should from hence conceive that wee also are now bound to use it; you must understand,

First, that in those dayes it was neither enjoyned, nor used as a religious ceremony appropriated

priated to this part of Gods worship, but as a civill signe whereby men were wont to testifie their sorrow; as wearing of black is now among us. So in that mourning for *Abner* (wherein there was no prayer nor religious duty performed) *David* commanded, *2 Sam. 3. 31. Rent your clotbes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourne before Abner.* So *Hezekiah* and his Nobles upon the hearing of *Rabshakehs* blasphemie, to testifie their sorrow, (though they kept no fast then) covered themselves with sackcloth, *2 King. 9. 1, 2.* Yea *Benhadads* servants (though they knew not what extraordinary prayer meant) when they were to sue to *Ahab* for mercy, to professe their sorrow and humility, put sackcloth on their loines, and ropes on their heads, *1 King. 20. 32.*

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Object. But how should it be so much used in this so solemne a part of Gods worship, and enjoined

Serm. 3. joyned also by the Lord, if it were meerly a civill thing, and no religious ceremony?

Ans. Wee are now enjoyned in our Church assemblies to weare such apparell as is comely, decent, and fit for our estate and condition; *I will* (saith the Apostle, speaking of the behaviour of all Gods people in the publike assemblies, 1 Tim. 2.9.) *in like manner also that women adorne themselves in modest apparell, with shamesfastnesse and sobriety*; and yet is that no Ecclesiasticall ceremony, no matter of religion, but a thing meerly civill.

Secondly, we must understand, that in these civill things, that might bee decent and fit in one Country, (and consequently commanded of God) which in another Country is utterly undecent, and consequently forbidden. It was a great sinne among the Corinthians for a woman to come into the Congregation

gation with her head uncovered; that is, without a veile to cover her whole head, 1 Cor. 11.5. In our Congregations (because it is indecent) it were a sinne for a woman to come so attired. In which respect, though wee have oft in the New Testament mention of fasts both publike and private; of sackcloth used in them, we have no mention at all.

Now this being premised for the understanding of the words, the thing we have to observe in them for our instruction is this; That *David* in his extraordinary prayer used these outward and bodily exercises as helps to his prayer: and from this wee have to learne what we should doe in the like case: that is,

That in the dayes of our humiliation, besides fervent prayer and the inward afflicting of the soule, there are certaine outward and bodily exercises to be used by Gods people.

As

Serm. 3.

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As in our ordinary prayers there be certain outward things may helpe us much, and consequently may not bee neglected; as first, fit time and place, wherein wee may be freeft from distraction. Our blessed Saviour himfelfe *in the morning before day, went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed*, as we read *Mar. 1. 35.* and commands us (*Mat. 6. 6.*) to goe into our closet to make our private prayers, and to shut the doore to us: and secondly, fit gestures also; as kneeling when wee can. *O come let us worship and fall downe; let us kneele before the Lord our maker*, saith the Prophet, *Psal. 95. 6.* and standing up when wee cannot conveniently kneele. The Publican (though he were much humbled and dejected in himfelfe) stood when hee prayed even in the Temple, as we read, *Luk. 18. 13.* For that also is a signe of reverence and humility.

When

When *Eglon* heard *Ehad* say, hee had a message to him from God: he arose out of his seat, (2 *Judg.* 3. 30.) so in our extraordinary prayers there be certaine outward and bodily exercises that may helpe us much, and are therefore not to be neglected by us. And those are of two sorts; some consist in doing and performing certaine duties; and some in forbearing some such things as at other times we may use.

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Four things I finde performed by Gods people at the times of their extraordinary prayers and dayes of humiliation, specially such as have beene publike and solemne.

First, the reading and preaching of the Word. Two notable examples we have for this, *Neh.* 9. 3. *They stood up in their place, and read in the Booke of the Law of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day.* And how did they read? That you shall find

Serm. 3. find, *Neh. 8. 8. They gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. Yea they applied it so effectually, that it wrought marvellously upon the peoples hearts, as appeareth vers. 9. The other example is, Jer. 36. 5, 6. Jeremiah commanded Baruch saying, I am shut up, I cannot goe into the house of the Lord: therefore goe thou, and read in the roll which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the Lord in the eares of the people, in the Lords house, upon the fasting day. And why did they use this? Not so much for the inlightning and informing of the judgement, as first, for to worke upon the heart, and further it in humiliation: for the Word is powerfull that way: Jer. 23. 29. Is not my Word like a hammer that breaketh the rocke in pieces? It is like Aarons rod, that is able to fetch water out of the rocke, Exod. 17. 6. and secondly, to quicken the*

Serm. 3.

the heart to fervent prayer: This reason *Jeremy* gives why hee would have preached to them on the day of their fast; and when hee could not doe that, would needs have *Baruch* read the word to them: *Jer. 36. 7. It may bee they will present their supplication before the Lord: this will stirre them up to pray fervently.*

Secondly, I finde singing of Psalmes used in a most publike & solemn fast, *2 Chro. 20. 19.* For, as there bee Psalmes of all sorts, of mourning & lamentation, as well as of thanksgiving; so is the exercise of singing them a singular meanes to stirre up holy affections of all sorts: *Eph. 5. 18, 19. Be ye filled with the Spirit: speaking to your selves in Psalmes.*

Thirdly, I find Gods people have used to joyn with their extraordinary prayers (as a meanes to make them the more effectual) almes-deeds and giving to the poore: *Act. 10. 4. Thy*

F

prayers

Serm. 3. prayers and thine almes-deeds
are come up for a memoriall be-
fore God. And no marvell: for,
see what testimony our Saviour
gives unto this, *Luk. 11. 41.*
*Give almes of such things as ye
have, and behold all things are
cleane unto you.*

Fourthly and lastly, I finde
that in their solemne fasts they
have beene wont to examine
and inquire what foule finnes
have beene committed amongst
them, that might be the causes
of Gods judgments; and to cen-
sure and reforme them. This to
have beene the custome of Gods
people, may appeare by the
fast that was kept in *Jerusalem*,
1 King. 21. 8, --- 10. *Jezebel*
wrote to the Elders and Nobles
there, to proclaime a fast: (upon
occasion pretended (as it seems)
of some great judgement on the
land, or on that city, present, or
feared): In this fast inquiry was
made (as it may appeare) what
should bee the cause of that
judgement.

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judgement. Two false witnesses
step up (suborned for the nonce)
and charge *Naboth* to bee the
cause of that judgement; for he
had blasphemed God and the
King. And indeed of all things
that can be done at a fast, this
hath beene held by Gods peo-
ple the principall, and that that
would give more force to their
prayers than any thing else. See
it in *Ezra*. 10. 1. — 3. so *Neh*.
9. 2. *The seede of Israel* (upon
the day of their fast) *separated
themselves from all strangers;*
and verse 38. they made a so-
lemne covenant with God; and
(*Chap. 10. 29, 30.*) bound them-
selves by an oath *to walke in
Gods Law, and to observe and
do all his commandements,* and
that they would no more match
with idolaters. Where this was
not done (by those whom it
concerned) where no care was
taken to finde out and amend
those things that did provoke
God to wrath, the prayers of the

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best men in the world could never prevaile much with God. See a notable example of this, *Josh. 7.* A better man than *Joshuah* could not pray; a more fervent and effectually prayer could no good man make than he did, *Josh. 7. 6, -- 9.* yet the Lord was so farre from hearkening to him, that he checks him for it, *vers. 13.* *Get thee up, wherefore lyeest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and shall never stand before their enemies, till they have found out, and purged themselves from this sinne. And as soone as Achan was found out and punished, Joshuahs prayer was heard presently, Josh. 8. 1.*

I have shewed you what these helpes are that are to bee used in our extraordinary prayers, which consist in doing and performing of certaine duties. There are some other helpes to bee used, which consist in forbearing and waining our selves from some things upon that day, which at
other

other times wee may lawfully use. Therefore the fast-day is called a day of restraint, *Joel* 1.14. & *Zac.* 7.3. The Jewes say that on every fast that they had kept (foure times a yeare during the whole time of their captivity, *Zac.* 8.19.) they had *separated themselves*. Now the things we must forbear on the fast-day are five in number:

First, all maner of food, all kinde of meat and drinke whatsoever. So in the fast that *Esther* enjoined, they might *neither eat nor drinke* while the fast lasted, *Esth.* 4.16. And so in the fast of *Niniveh*, *Jon.* 3.7. *Let them not taste any thing, let them not feed nor drinke water*. So of *Ezra* (Chap. 10.6.) it is said that on the fast-day *hee did eate no bread, nor drinke water*.

Secondly, all costlinesse and neatnesse in our apparell and attire must bee forborne on that day. See such examples for this as are beyond all exception,

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even of great Princes. In a private and domesticall fast (I meane not a secret fast, of which our Saviour saith, *Matt. 6. 17. When thou fastest, annoint thine head, and wash thy face*) it is said of *David, 2 Sam. 12. 20.* and of *Esther, Chap. 5. 1.* that when their fast was ended, they *changed their apparell*, and put on that that befitted their degree; which argueth plainly, that while their fast lasted they had forborne to weare it. And in a publike fast we have the like example of the King of Niniveh, *Jon. 3. 6. Hee laid his rabe from him and covered himselfe with sackcloth.* For as bravery, costlinesse and neatnesse in apparell hath great cause to puffe up our flesh, and make it proud: so the neglect of the costlinesse and neatnesse of our apparell (when it is voluntary) is a speciall meanes both to testifie and increase the humiliation of the heart. So
Mephibosheth

Serm. 3.

Mephibosheth sheweth his sorrow for *Dauids* trouble, 2 *Sam.* 19. 24. Hee had neither trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day that the King departed, till hee came againe in peace. So *Exod.* 33. 4. When the people had heard those evill tidings, (that God would not goe with them into Canaan) they mourned, and no man did put on his ornaments: and this they did by Gods expresse commandement, as appeares in the next verse.

Thirdly, wee must abstaine (while the fast lasteth) from delights of all sorts, from all means of joy and gladnesse, which at other times are most lawfull: even from the delight which is taken in the marriage bed, 1 *Cor.* 7. 5. even the new-married couple must do it, *Jool.* 2. 16. much more from musicke, *Dan.* 6. 18. and from all recreations whatsoever. It is spoken of therefore as a foule sin, *Esa.* 58. 3.

Serm. 3.

Behold, in the day of your fasting ye find pleasure.

Fourthly, we must also abstaine from the workes of our calling, not onely servile (as on other holy dayes; *Levit. 23. 7, 8, 21, 25, 35.*) but on the Sabbath, and on the fast day all workes are forbidden, *Levit. 16, 29.* and *23, 28, 31.* and that upon no small penalty: *Levit. 23. 30.* *Whatsoever soule it bee that doth any worke in that same day, the same soule will I destroy from among his people.*

Fifthly, and lastly, we must also upon the fast day make some abatement of our naturall rest and sleep: *2. Sam. 12. 16.* *David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth;* and *Joel 1. 13.* *Ly all night in Sackcloth, ye ministers of my God;* which it was not possible for them to doe without some abatement of their ordinary rest and sleepe. And the reason of this is evident, because as ordinary, and
much

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much sleepe is a great means of satisfaction, and contentment to the body (*I said my bed shall comfort mee, saith Job. 7. 13. my couch shall ease my complaint*) so doth the want of it afflict the body much, as appeareth also by *Jobs* complaint: *Wearisome nights are appointed to me* (saith he *Job. 7. 3. 4.*) *when I lye downe, I say. when shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossing to and fro unto the dawning of the day.*

And this separation, and restraint of our selves from these foure things, must continue during the space of one whole day, that is, foure and twenty houres. No fast wee read of in Scripture continued for any lesse time. And we have expresse commandement wee should keepe it as a Sabbath: *Lev. 16. 31. It shall be a Sabbath of rest unto you.* Yea in this very point we should keep it as a Sabbath: *Lev. 23. 32. It shall begin in the ninth day*

Serm. 3. (of the seventh month) *at even; from even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbath.* Now before I proceed to give you the reasons why this abstinence, and restraining of our selves in these foure things should be so necessary upon the day of our fast, I must give you certaine cautions to prevent the mistaking of this Doctrine.

Cautions
1.

First, that this outward abstinence is not the chiefe part of a true fast, nor the chiefe helpe to our prayers; the inward humiliation of the soule is farre more acceptable to God, and hath more force to make our prayers pierce the Heavens than all this. *Bodily exercise profiteth little* (saith the Apostle. 1 Tim. 4. 8. and such are all these foure parts of abstinence that you have heard of) *but godlinesse* (whereof the inward afflicting of the soule, and mortifying of our lusts is a chiefe part) *is profitable unto all things. Rent your*

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your hearts, and not your garments, saith the Prophet, *Joel* 2.13. Nay the restraining of our selves in these foure things is in it selfe no service of God nor acceptable at all unto him, further than as it is a helpe to the inward humiliation of the heart, and even animated by it. That that is said of the one of these, may be fitly said of all: *Matth.* 15. 11. *That which goeth into the mouth defileth not a man:* and *Rom.* 14. 17. *The Kingdome of God consisteth not in meate or drinke.*

Secondly, that these outward signes, and helps to humiliation must bee increased according to the increase and urgencie of the cause. As there bee degrees in Gods judgements on a Land, or familie, or person, some more generall than other some, some more extreme than other some, seven times more grievous as the Lord speaketh, *Levit.* 26. 24. and such as doe more deeply affect

Caution
2.

Serm. 3.

fect the heart; so ought these outward signes, and helpees of our humiliation, bee proportionable thereunto. Whereas ordinarily the fasts we read of lasted but a day (*Levit. 23. 32. from event to even. Judg. 20. 26. they fasted that day untill even. 2 Sam. 1. 12. they mourned and wept, and fasted untill even*) the fast we read of, *Esth. 4. 16.* was kept *three dayes and three nights together.*

If any man shall aske mee, doth not that example bind us? I answer three things. First, that we in these Northerne Climates are not able to forbear meate so long as they in those Countries were. (Experience teacheth us that the Spaniard and Italian needs not meate so much as wee.) Secondly, wee have not (blessed be God) the like occasion. That judgement was so extreme, generall, presently imminent, as they might well hold out their fast so long with feeling,

ling and affection; which is the maine thing to bee looked unto in this case, and without hope and likelihood of that, the injoyning of the other were but grosse hypocrisie, as is plain by that speech of our Saviour, *Mat. 15. 7, 8.* Thirdly, from that example we learne, that though we cannot keepe so long a time without any intermission, as they did, yet when 'God shall increase the causes and occasions of our humiliation, we may and ought to increase and multiply our fasts in that manner as the men of *Jabesh Gilead* did, *1 Sam. 31. 13.* they fasted seven dayes. Which also justifieth this most Christian and religious decree of our King and State, in injoyning (during this time of so great calamity) a generall fast to be kept every weeke.

Thirdly, that this law of outward abstinence in the dayes of our humiliation must give place to the necessity of man;
necessity

Serm. 3.

Caution
3.

Serm. 3.

necessity (said I?) yea even unto decency and conveniency also in some sort. Though wee must on the fasting day abridge our selves in our apparell, yet may we have respect to comelinesse in our apparell even on that day. We may not disguise our bodies, or make them ridiculous, as our Saviour noteth it to have beene the fashion of hypocrites to do. *They disfigure their faces* (saith hee, *Matth, 6. 16.*) *that they may appear unto men to fast.* It is required even of the Minister, and so likewise of other men, to be *κόσμιος*, comely and decent even that way, *1 Tim. 3. 2.* So though wee must for the whole day of our humiliation abstaine from all food, yet such as cannot fast so long without evident danger, first, either of their health, or secondly, of making themselves unfit to performe the spirituall duties of the day, may lawfully eat something upon the fast day. Two things

things will make this evident :

Serm. 3.

First, the rest of the Sabbath (which is as strictly injoynd as abstinence at a fast, yet) might bee lawfully broken for the preservation of a mans life, as wee see in *Eliahs* travell (*1 King. 19. 8.*) five or sixe Sabbaths together ; yea for the preservation of the life of a beast, *Luk. 14. 5.* yea for the preservation of the health of a beast, *Luk. 13. 15.* For God delights more in mercy, than in any externall workes even of his owne service, *Mat. 12. 7.*

Secondly, this abstinence is injoynd but for a helpe to our prayers, and other spirituall duties ; when once it ceaseth to be a helpe, and proves an hindrance to them, then is it of no worth with God. I grant that such as cannot thus abstaine, cannot keepe a fast ; but yet may they keepe a day of humiliation in as acceptable and effectuall a manner, as they that can fast best.

Provided,

Serm. 3.

Provided, first, that they abuse not this liberty, and pretend necessitie when there is none; but remember that they have herein to deale with God which knoweth their heart, *1 Thess. 2. 4. Gal. 5. 13. Brethren, ye are called unto liberty, onely use not your liberty as an occasion to the flesh.* Secondly, that that which they eat upon the day of humiliation, bee neither for quantity nor quality such, but that they may still preserve in themselves such a feeling of the want of food as may afflict nature, as we see *Daniel* did, *Dan. 10. 3. I ate no pleasant bread; neither came flesh nor wine within my mouth, neither did I anoint my selfe at all, till three whole weekes were fulfilled.*

Reason.

Now for the reasons and grounds of the Doctrine, why such bodily exercises (especially this abstinence) must bee used upon the dayes of our humiliation, I need goe no further than this;

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this; that God hath ordained them in his Word, as you have heard; and therefore we may be assured, first, they are usefull and profitable for us: for whatsoever hee commands us to doe, is for *our good*, Deut. 10. 13. Secondly, that hee will make them effectuall to his people unto those ends hee hath ordained them for. *Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you* (saith our Saviour; Mat. 28. 20.) and loe I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, And those ends are three principally:

First, to further and helpe forward the inward humiliation of the heart, to make us the better to feele what sinne is, and what it hath deserved at Gods hands. For as the full feeding and pleasing of the body in these things, is a meanes to increase corruption: Jer. 5. 7, 8. *When I fed them to the full, then they committed adultery, &c. they were*

Serm. 3. *were as fed horses in the morning, &c.* so the abridging of it in these things is effectually to weaken and abate the strength of sinne: 1 Cor. 9. 27. *I keepe under my body, and bring it into subjection.* By this wee take revenge of our selves, which is a great helpe unto true repentance, as the Apostle sheweth, 2 Cor. 7. 14.

2. Secondly, to farther and helpe forward the fervency of our hearts in prayer. This is evident by that speech of Christ, *Mar. 9. 29. This kinde can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.*

3. Thirdly, to professe and make outward protestation of our repentance and submission unto God, and humble desire to bee reconciled unto him. And even this is highly pleasing unto God, as we may see in the example of *Ahab*, 1 King. 21. 29. *Because he humbled himselfe before mee, therefore I will not bring*

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bring the evill in his dayes; and of Rehoboam and his Princes, *They have humbled themselves* (saith the Lord, 2 Chron. 12.7.) therefore I will not destroy them: & verse 12 *When Rehoboam humbled himselfe, the wrath of the Lord turned from him;* and yet had these no truth of grace in them. In which respect (though, first, no man can please God in his fast, nor finde sound comfort to his soule in it, that is not in his heart troubled for his sinne, doth not unfainedly repent, that cannot pray, that doth not beleeeve. *Wee know* (saith the man that was borne blind, Joh. 9.31.) *that God heareth not sinners.* And, *without faith it is impossible to please God,* saith the Apostle, Heb. 11.6. Secondly, though no man be fit to keepe a private and voluntary fast, that is a novice in religion, and hath not attained to some good measure of grace, for feare of taking hurt, and being made the

Serm. 3. the worke by it; according to that speech of our Saviour, *Luk. 5. 36, 37. The new piece will make the rent greater: the new wine will burst the bottles: yet* in publike and generall calamities they may bee injoynd to keepe a fast that have no such measure of grace in them; as we see, *Joel 1. 14. Gather the Elders, and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord: and 2. 16. Gather the children, and those that sucke the breasts.* Yea it hath greatly furthered the efficacie of the prayers of Gods own people, when in such a case all have come (tag and rag, as we say) to joyn with them in this service, as I noted to you the last day out of *Judg. 20. 26.*

Object.

If any man shall object, God will not heare hypocrites and wicked men: *Job 27. 9. Will God heare his cry?* and, *If I regard iniquity in my heart* (saith David. *Psal. 66. 18.*) *the Lord will not heare mee.*

I answer.

I answer. It is true, such can have no assurance that God will heare them or respect their prayers, because they have no promise. *Godlinesse hath the promises*, saith the Apostle, *1 Tim. 4. 8.* All Gods promises belong to the godly, and to them onely. But yet for temporall blessings God hath oft had respect to the cryes even of such as have had no truth of grace; as is plaine, *Gen. 21. 17. God heard the voice of Ishmael:* and *Psal. 78. 38. Many a time* (upon their prayers whom hee had described verse 37.) *turned hee his anger away.*

For first, in this they were thus farre no hypocrites, because they were heartily sensible of Gods judgements, and desired unfainedly to bee eased of them. Therefore it is said, *2 Chron. 12. 6. The Princes of Israel and the King humbled themselves.*

2 This taking to heart of
Gods

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Answ.

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Gods judgements, and professing their humiliation, and their yeelding to the commandement of authority in this case (as in the dayes of the Judges and Jehosaphat wee heard all the people did) these (I say) were good things, and remainders of Gods image in them. In which respect the Holy Ghost saith, 2 Chron. 30. 12. *In Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart, to doe the commandement of the King and of the Princes, by the Word of the Lord.* And these remainders of his owne image God loves wheresoever he sees them: Mark. 10. 21. *Jesus beholding him loved him.*

The Use this Doctrine serveth unto, is,

Use 1.

First, for instruction, to direct us how wee should keepe our fasts. Though this bee a Doctrinall point, and not so fit haply to worke upon our affections as some other might bee, and such as doth also concerne but the outside

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outside of the true fast, yet have
I bene the larger in it; because
it may serve for a preparation to
all the fasts we shall keepe here-
after; and the fruit and successe
of our fasts depend on our per-
forming of them in that manner
God hath appointed. Many that
are willing to obey God in this
duty, may through ignorance
faile in the right manner of per-
forming it, and so not onely lose
their labour, but offend God fur-
ther: 1 Chron. 15. 13. *The Lord
our God (said David) made a
breach upon us, because wee
sought him not in due order.* And
though God haue in our fasts a
principall respect to our hearts;
1 Sam. 16. 7. yet lookes he also
for the service of our bodies; spe-
cially in such exercises of pub-
like and solemne profession:
1 Cor. 6. 28. *Glorifie God in your
bodies,* saith the Apostle. And
though these you have heard be
not the chiefe duties to bee per-
formed at a fast, yet are they
duties

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duties commanded, and he that makes not conscience of the least Commandement of God, can have no comfort in his estate: *Psal. 119. 6. Then shall I not bee ashamed when I have respect to all thy Commandements.*

Secondly, for exhortation to us all to make conscience of every one of these outward duties that have beene commanded to us; that is

First, of joyning with the congregation in hearing the Word, even read aswell as preached. See what a reverend respect Gods people shewed even to the Word read: *Neh. 8. 3. The ears of all the people were attentive unto the booke of the Law;* and verse 5. *When Ezra opened the booke (to read it) all the people stood up.* Make conscience to joyne with the congregation in those prayers that are read aswell as in those that are conceived. For those that are read are

holy,

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holy and good prayers, and all the congregation should make their prayers and supplications with one accord, as they did, *Act. 1. 14.* Hold thy selfe bound to joyne with the congregation in singing of Psalmes also. See how well God shewed himselfe to bee pleased with this dutie: *2 Chron. 20. 22.* When they began to sing, and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, &c.

Secondly, of giving according to thy ability somewhat to the poore: *Luk. 21. 2, 3.* Christ tooke notice of them that contributed, and praised the poore widow.

Thirdly, to make it a day of restraint in the matter of food of all sorts, so farre as thy health will permit; in the matter of thy apparell so farre as decencie will permit; in the matter of thy delights of all sorts, and in the matter of thy worldly affaires.

G

Yea

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Yea fourthly, of holding out in these duties a whole day.

Fifthly, take heede of hypocrisie, and thinking that thy performance of these outward things will serve thy turne, and merit at Gods hands. When our Saviour saw what an *innumerable multitude* of people came to heare him, in so much that they trode one upon another (Luk. 12. 1.) hee began to say to his Disciples first of all, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie. And this caveat wee have all just cause to give to you in such great assemblies as this is, (specially at our solemne fasts) take heed of hypocrisie, rest not in, nor blesse your selves in the deed you have done; but referre these outward things unto those right ends, which I have told you they were ordained for. And remember alwaies that speech of the Apostle, Rom. 2. 29. *Hee is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision*

circumcision (so is humiliation also) is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God.

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Use 1.

Thirdly, for reproofe of sundry abuses which are chiefe causes why our fasts prevaile no more with God.

First, such are to be reprov'd as refuse to joyne with Gods people in this duty, and will not separate themselves from their profits and delights, no not so much as one day in a month, though God calls them to it, and the King also commands them to doe it; But like them of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* (of whom we read, 2 *Chron.* 30. 10.) are ready to laugh the officers to scorn, and to mocke them that in the Kings name require them to doe it.

Let no man say, had wee not better have their roome than their company? What good can wee hope to receive by having such as they to joyne with us in

Serm. 3. our fasts? For (as you have heard) the comming of all in this case, would doe us good, and further our prayers; and this open contempt that such men in all parts do shew, may make us all fare the worse. You therefore that are officers, do what you can to re-
straine them from their labours, and to bring them hither. Remember that you are also comprehended in the number of those servants to whom the charge is given, *Luk. 14. 23. Goe out and compell them to come in, that my house may be filled.*

Secondly, such as do come, and joyne with us (though they doe that also but by the halves) but so soone as they are gone forget the occasion of our fasts, remember no longer the affliction of *Joseph*, give themselves as full liberty to all delights and jollity, as if there were no judgement at all upon the land. Marke well how God complaines of them, that in a time of com-

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mon calamity, did give themselves liberty even in lawfull delights. Marke well that speech, that you shall find, *Esa. 22. 14.* Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till yee die, saith the Lord of Hosts. Why, what had they done? See that verse 13. Behold joy and gladnesse, slaying of Oxen, and killing of sheepe, eating of Flesh, and drinking of Wine. Why, what evill, or unlawfulness was there in all this? True; but this was that that so much provoked the Lord, that they gave themselves to this jollity at such a time as the Lord God of Hostes did (by his judgements) call them to weeping, and to mourning, to baldnesse, and to girding with sackcloth, as we read, verse 12. That they did this, with contempt of Gods judgements, saying and resolving with themselves thus profanely and desperately, as verse 13. *Let us eate and drinke, for to morrow we shall*

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shall die. And what unlawfulness was there in that which *Amos* so much complaineth of, Chap. 6. 4, 6. In lying upon beds of Ivory, or in stretching themselves upon their couches, or in eating the Lambes out of the flocke, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; or in chaunting to the sound of the Viol, and inventing to themselves instruments of musicko like David; or in drinking wine in bowles, and annointing themselves with the chiefe ointments? Were any of these things unlawfull? No; but because they did this in such a time, as *Joseph* (the Church of God) was in great affliction; because they did hereby declare that they were not grieved for the affliction of *Joseph*; because they did by these means put farre away from them the evil day, as the Prophet speaketh, verse 3. and made themselves forgetfull, and senselesse of Gods judgement; therefore was

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was the Lord so highly offended with them for it. Consider of these places (well beloved) and you will easily discern, that in such evill times as these are, in times of great calamity, either upon our selves or upon our brethren, wee must all of us somewhat abridge our selves both in our feasts, and in our bravery, and in our lawfull delights of all sorts whatsoever.

When the Lords sword is sharpened to make a sore slaughter (saith the Prophet, Ezek. 21. 10.)

when it is furbished that it may glitter (much lesse when we see it hath already made a great slaughter among our brethren, as we now see it hath, and is even dyed red with their blood)

should wee then make mirth?

And if the Lord will not allow us in such times the free use of our most lawfull delights, what will the Lord say then to the mirth used even in this time of common calamity in our Ale-

G 4 houses,

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houses and at our wakes, where lewd men of all sorts assemble themselves by troopes, *Jer. 5.7.* to provoke one another to all kind of lewdnesse? Will there be any hope our fasts shall doe much good while our disordered wakes are continued, and frequented so in such times as these are?

Thirdly, such as having power in their hand do not endeavour to finde out, and reforme the causes of the plague. Though *Joshua*, and all the Elders of Israel should fall upon their faces, and crye never so fervently, they can do no good till *Achan* bee found out, and punished, *Joshua, 7.* And what hope then can wee have to prevaile in our fasts, while no care is taken to find out *Achan*? The idolater is an *Achan*; and so is the murtherer; & so is the adulterer; and so is the blasphemers; and so is the drunkard. And there is power, not in *Joshua* onely, but in

in every officer among us, yea
in every man almost, to find out
our *Achans*, and bring them to
punishment. Our *Achans* are
not so close as that man was;
our *Achans* do not hide their
accursed things as he did, *Josh.*
7. 21. Endeavour every one of
you to finde them out and
suppresse them, or else our
fasts will be of small
force with
God.

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SERMON IV.

SEPTEMBER. XIV.

M.DC.XXV.



Ow it followeth that wee observe further the inward affection, and disposition of *Dauids* heart in this his extraordinary prayer: *Hee humbled* or afflicted *his soule*. And here we must (for the opening of the words and phrase) see what is meant by the humbling and afflicting of his soule, and how that is done: for the understanding wherof three things must be observed;

First, that the soule aswell as the body is subject both to prosperity (a blessed and comfortable estate) and to adversity also,

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also, (awofull and afflicted estate and condition;) and that not only in the life to come, but even in this life also. For the first, see *3 Joh. 2. I wish thou maist prosper, and bee in health, even as thy soule prospereth*; and for the other, see *Psalme. 31. 7. Thou hast considered my trouble, thou hast knowne my soule in adversities.*

Secondly, that as the prosperity, happinesse, and glory of the soule consisteth in inward peace, tranquillity and joy: *Rom. 14. 17. The Kingdome of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; so that which humbleth and afflicteth, it is sorrow and feare, and such like affections, which are therefore called the passions and perturbations of the soule: *Prov. 12. 25. Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoope*, that is that that humbleth it. Yea these affections of sorrow and feare do afflict the soule, and put it to paine,

Serm. 4. paine even as prickes, and wounds, and the stinging of a Serpent would do the body. So it is said, *Act. 2. 37. They were pricked in their hearts*, when by *Peters* sermon they were brought to found griefe of heart for sin, and feare of Gods wrath. So *Prov. 23. 32. Sin is said at last to bite like a Serpent, and sting like an Adder*, by reason of the extreme anguish, which through sorrow and feare it puts the soule unto.

Thirdly, that sometimes the Lord himselfe doth thus afflict, and humble the soule with sorrow and feare: *Job 5. 18. Hee woundeth, and his hands make whole*; and the strokes that hee gives prove usually extreme, and intolerable; *Pf. 51. 8. That the bones that thou hast broken may rejoyce*: The Lords strokes broke his bones. *Prov. 18. 14. A wounded spirit who can beare?* That is, when the wound is given by Gods hand: *Heb. 10. 31.*

It

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It is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the living God: and sometimes Gods people (for the preventing of this) have voluntarily afflicted, and humbled their owne soules, by provoking themselves to sorrow and feare, wherby their soules might bee humbled, knowing well, 1 Cor. 11. 31. *If we would judge our selves we should not be judged of the Lord.* And so did David in this place, *I humbled and afflicted my soule by fasting.* So saith he also, *Psal. 69. 10. I wept and chastned my soule by fasting.* And this the Apostle injoynes the faithfull to do: *Jam. 4. 9. Be afflicted* (he meanes not, beare or suffer the afflictions God layeth upon you, but afflict your selves, as appeares in the next words) *and mourne and weepe, let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into heavinesse.*

So then if wee would know the reason why David did fast

at

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at this time, it was to humble and afflict his soule & worke his soule to sorrow and griefe: And what meant hee in this his extraordinary praier for these men to afflict his soule thus? Surely it was to make his prayer more availeable with God for them. And from this his practise and example, this Doctrine ariseth for our instruction:

Doct. 4.

That the chiefe use of a religious fast is to humble and afflict the soule with sorrow and griefe; and a chiefe thing that makes our prayer effectuall with God, is the inward humiliation and sorrow of our soules, from whence they doe proceed. Two branches there be (you see) of this doctrine, and I will handle them distinctly.

Branch.

I.

First, a religious fast serves chiefly to this end, to humble and afflict the soule. So *Esa. 58.* *The fast that God hath chosen is called a day for a man to afflict his soule in.* This

is a duty commanded upon the fast day: *Joel 2. 13. Rend your hearts, and not your garments.* See how this is enjoined: *Lev. 23. 29. Whatsoever soule it bee that shall not bee afflicted upon that day, he shall be cut off from his people.* So our Saviour gives this for a reason why his Disciples could keepe no fasts, because they could not mourne while the Bridegroom was with them, *Matt. 9. 15.* So that no man can keepe a fast well that cannot mourne; that hath not an humbled and troubled soule in him on that day.

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Therefore we read that Gods people in their fasts were wont to weepe much, and that not onely in private and secret fasts; as *Nehem. 1. 4. I sate downe, and wept, and mourned certain daies, and fasted, and prayed before the God of Heaven: but in publique also: Ezra 10. 1. When Ezra prayed, and made confession of sinnes, weeping, and casting*

Serm. 4. *sting himselfe downe before the house of God, there assembled unto him a very great congregation, and the people wept very sore. Yea God commandeth his people to doe so at such times. When God calls us to keep fasts, hee calls us to weeping, and to mourning, Esa. 22. 12. So Joel 2. 12. Turne you to mee with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.*

Branch
2.

And for the second branch of the Doctrine. A chiefe thing that makes the prayers of Gods people at a fast, or at any other time, most powerfull and effectuall with God, is the humiliation and sorrow of the soule, from which those prayers doe proceed. See the prooffe of this in the most powerfull fasts that we read of, *Judg. 20. 26.* In that fast wherein Israel prevailed with God for successe against the *Benjamites* after two notable foiles before, there were many

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*Something
is wanting
here*

many teares shed, all Israel wept before the Lord, yet were there above ten thousand of as valiant men as ever drew sword. In the fast that was kept in *Samuels* time at *Mizpeh*, whereby Israel obtained a marvellous victory against the Philistines, *1 Sam. 7. 10.* The Lord thundred with a great thunder upon the Philistines on that day, the people wept so abundantly that they are said, vers. 6. to have drawne water (as by bucketfuls) and to have poured it out before the Lord. Neither hath this been found true at fasts only, but at all times the more the heart of him that prayeth is humbled, the more power shall his prayer have with God. See this in foure notable examples:

First, it was a powerfull prayer that *Jacob* made when hee had power over the Angel, and prevailed, *Hos. 12. 4.* But marke the story, and you shall finde hee was marvellously humbled, when

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when hee did so marvellously prevaile: Christ wrestled with him, and snote his thigh out of joynt, *Gen. 32. 25. & Hos. 12. 4.* it is said *hee wept, and prayed.*

Secondly, it was a powerfull prayer that *Hannah* the mother of *Samuel* made, when she that was barren by nature, obtained a sonne by it, but *Hannah* was greatly humbled, and afflicted in soule when shee made that prayer: *1 Sam. 1. 10. She was in bitterness of soule, and prayed to the Lord, and wept sore.*

Thirdly, it was a powerfull prayer that *Hezekiah* made in his sicknesse, which reversed the sentence that God had given him notice of by his Prophet, and procured fiftene yeares more to be added to his life, *2 King. 20.* But what was it that made it so powerfull? Surely it was the sorrow, and humiliation of his heart. For so the Lord bids the Prophet tell him: *2 King. 20. 5. I have heard thy prayer*

prayer, and have seen thy teares.

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Lastly, it was a most powerfull prayer, whereby *Manasseh* (one of the horriblest sinners that ever lived) prevailed so farre, that God was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, 2 *Chron.* 33. 13. But when made he that prayer? See vers. 12. when *he had humbled himselfe greatly before the Lord.* Therefore it is noted by the Prophet to bee the ordinary courie of the afflicted soule, that hee may prevaile in his prayer: *Lam.* 3. 29. *Hee putteth his mouth in the dust, if so bee there may be hope.* To breed hope in himselfe, that God will regard & shew respect to his prayer, he abaseth and humbleth himselfe in the lowest maner that he can. In so much as upon these manifold experiments Gods people have growne wonderfully confident in this, that when they could bring their hearts to this humiliation & sorrow, their pray-
ers

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ers then should certainly pre-
vaile with God. See therefore
how they have pleaded their
tears even before God: *Pf. 39. 12.*

*Heare my prayer, O Lord, give
eare to my cry, hold not thy peace
at my teares: and Pf. 6. 6. All the
night long I make my bed to
swimme, I water my couch with
my teares: and ver. 8. The Lord
hath heard the voyce of my wee-
ping. As if he should have said,
My teares cryed louder than my
tongue could do, and the Lord
had more respect to my teares
than to my words. The Lord (I
tell you) makes precious account
of the teares of his people: *Psal.
56. 8. Put thou my teares in thy
bottle: are they not in thy booke?**

*Two sorts
of reasons.*

The reasons & grounds of this
Doctrine are worthy to bee in-
quired into; & the reason of two
things must be inquired of. First,
what have beene the causes of
that sorrow & humiliation that
Gods people have been wont to
afflict their soules with, & which
God

God hath had so much respect unto. Secondly, what are the reasons why God hath had such delight in this to see his people thus humbled, and afflicted in their soules.

For the first, we shall find that the reason, and ground of the sorrow of Gods children, that God hath beene so much delighted in, hath beene no worldly thing. I deny not but that they have also their worldly sorrowes, but those make them never a whit the more acceptable to God. Wee read of divers that have had their hearts afflicted, & humbled in great measure, & yet their sorrow pleased God never a whit, nor made their prayers ever a whit the more powerfull with him. *Nabals* heart was heavie & sorrowfull enough; *1. Sam.* 25. 37. *It died within him* for griefe & feare, and became as a stone: and so was *Judas* his heart heavie enough, *Mat.* 27. 24. And when *Esau* had lost the blessing and

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and birth-right irrecoverably,
*Gen. 27. 34. hee cryed out with
 a great & exceeding bitter cry.*
 Yea, even at fasts many have af-
 flicted their soules with sorrow,
 and pleased God never a whit,
 nor prayed ever a whit the bet-
 ter: *Esa. 58. 3. Wherefore have
 wee afflicted our soule, and thou
 takest no knowledge?* and *Zach.*
*7. 3. Should I weepe in the fifth
 month, separating my selfe as I
 have done these so many yeares?*
 The Lord denies not that they
 afflicted their soules, and wept
 in their fasts, but saith, *Zach. 7. 5.*
they did it not unto him; they
 respected not the Lord, but
 themselves in their sorrow; it
 was not a sorrow according to
 God. Marke therefore the diffe-
 rence of this sorrow of the godly
 from the other, in foure grounds
 and reasons of their sorrow.

First, the godly have afflicted
 their soules with sorrow, for the
 afflictions, of others out of a
 compassion and fellow-feeling
 they

Serm. 4.

they have had of their miseries. So did *David* here. This pleaseth God well, as we may see in the comfort that *Job* tooke in it, *Job* 30.25. Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? was not my soule grieved for the poore? So *Jerem.* 13.17. Mine eyes shall weep sore, and runne downe with teares, because the Lords flocke is carried away captive. This would please God well, if wee could afflict our selves; first, for that fearefull sicknesse, whereby God sweeps away so many of our brethren, in so uncomfortable a maner: they dye in our high wayes, and in our fields, without all meanes of comfort. Secondly, for the poverty this brings on them that escape. Thirdly, for the captivity of the Lords flocke in *Bohemia*, and the *Palatinate*.

Secondly, the godly have afflicted their soules with sorrow, when the Lord hath shewed himselfe to be angry with them,
either

Serm. 4.

either by threatening them by his Word and Prophets, or by executing his judgements upon them.

For the first, see two notable examples. The one, *Judg. 2. 2, 5.* When the Lord by his messenger had chidden Israel for making a league with the Canaanites, and not throwing downe their altars; and threatned that therefore he would not drive them out of their Land, but they should be as thorns in their sides, and their gods should be a snare to them, they lift up their voice and wept, and there was such weeping there, as the name of that place was called *Bochim*. The other example is *Josia*, hee was humbled in his soule, and wept when hee but heard the Lords threats against Judah, read out of the booke of the Law: *2 Chron. 34. 27.* *Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thy selfe before the Lord thy God, when thou heardst*

heardst his words against this place, and humbledst thy selfe before mee, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before mee, I have even heard thee, saith the Lord. Wherein also we may observe, how well God is pleased to see his people fall into these passions of feare and sorrow, when he by his Word doth rebuke and threaten them. Which the Lord also professeth, *Esay 66.2.* But to this man will I looke, even to him that is poore, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my Word. So when God hath shewed himselfe to be angry and displeased with them, by executing any of his judgements upon them, they have then bin wont, and it was their duty then to afflict their soules. If her father (saith the Lord of Miriam, *Numb. 12. 14.*) had but spit in her face, should shee not bee ashamed seven dayes? See a plaine prooffe of this, *2 Chron. 7. 13.* If I send pestilence

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Serm. 4.

lence among my people, if my people shall humble themselves and pray, and seeke my face. Marke, not their owne losse by the judgement should trouble them so much as Gods anger; and therefore in their prayer they seeke Gods face and favour above all things. And this is very pleasing unto God, to see his people humble themselves so under the stroakes of his hand. See a notable example of this, 2 Chron. 12. 3, 4. Shishak King of Egypt came against Jerusalem with a mighty army, and tooke the fenced Cities that pertained to Judah, and came to Jerusalem. See what followed, 2 Chron. 12. 6. The Princes of Israel, and the King humbled themselves, and they said, The Lord is righteous. And what followed upon that? Ver. 7. And when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the Word of the Lord came to Shemajah, saying, they have humbled them-

themselves, therefore I will not destroy them. Serm. 4.

Thirdly, when they have seen God dishonoured by the sinnes of others, then have they also mourned and afflicted their soules. *Jeremy* professeth, chap. 13. 17. *If you will not heare, my soule shall weep in secret places for your pride.* So *David* professeth, that the zeale of Gods house (the inward vexation of his soule through zealous sorrow and indignation for the neglect and profanation of Gods worship) had even eaten him up, and consumed him, *Psal. 69. 9.* specially the foule sinnes that they have knowne in the places (Townes, Congregations, Families) where themselves lived. So it is said of *Lot*, 2 *Pet. 2. 8.* *That righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing vexed his righteous soule from day to day with their unlawfull deeds.* So *Paul* saith the *Corinthians* should have done:

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1 Cor. 5. 2. *Yee are puffed up, and have not rather mourned.* And see how highly God is pleased with this, when his people can mourne for this cause: *Ezek. 9. 4. And the Lord said unto him (that was clothed with linnen, and had the writers inke-horne by his side,) Goe through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a marke upon the fore-heads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.*

Fourthly and lastly, the chiefe cause why they have bin so given to mourning and weeping, why they have afflicted themselves so much, hath been their owne sinnes, whereby themselves have offended and dishonoured God. This David professeth was the cause why his sorrow was continually before him, *he was sorry for his sinne, Psal. 38. 16, 17.* This was the cause why *Mary Magdalen* wept

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wept so abundantly, that she was able to wash Christs feet with her teares, she was a sinner, *Luk. 7. 37, 38.* This sorrow God wonderfully delights in more than in all outward worship whatsoever: *Pf. 51. 17. The Sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*

Now come wee to the second inquiry, to finde out the true causes and reasons of this, why God should so much desire and delight to see his people humbled with sorrow, to see them afflict and chasten their soules in this manner. It is laid of him, that *he hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants, Psalme 35. 27.* that *hee doth not afflict willingly, Lam. 3. 33.* that *in all the afflictions of his people he is afflicted, Esa. 63. 9.* And indeed it is true, that our sorrowes in themselves please not God, but only in respect,

First, of the causes and foun-
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taines from whence they proceed: that is, 1. They are the worke of his owne Spirit. It is the Spirit of God only that gives to any man such a fleshy and soft heart; as we may see by that promise, *Ezek. 11. 19. I will give them one heart, and will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: And, I will poure upon them my spirit; and they shall mourne abundantly,* saith the Lord, *Zech. 12. 10.* And God must needs take pleasure in the worke of his owne grace and holy Spirit. 2. These teares proceed from our love to God. Kindnesse (you know) causeth teares more than any thing else; so it is in this case. Christ saith of the woman that wept so abundantly, *that shee loved much,* *Luke 7. 47.* And that which makes men most of all to mourn for sinne, is the Spirit of grace, which perswades us of Gods free

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free love to us, and that Christ was pierced by and for us, *Zech. 12.10.* And this (above many other workes of his Spirit) God greatly delighteth in: *1 Cor. 8.3.* *If any man love God, the same is knowne of him.*

Secondly, in respect of the end that this sorrow tends unto, the issue and effect of it, the Lord greatly delighteth in it. Hee seeth wee have need of it: *1 Pet. 1.6.* *Now for a season (if need be) you are in heaviness.* The Lord seeth it will doe us much good, and therefore he is so well pleased with it: *Eccles. 7.3.* *By the sadnessse of the countenance, the heart is made better.* It makes us more capable of every grace of God, and fitter to receive it. As the vessel that is full can receive no good liquor, but all is spilt that is poured upon it; and the emptier it is, the more it will receive: so is it in this case.

Jam. 4.6. *God will give grace to*

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the humble. For knowledge, Psal. 25. 9. The meeke will hee teach his way. And for comfort, 2 Cor. 7. 6. God comforteth those that are cast downe. 2. It worketh repentance unto salvation; and the heart is never wont to bee truly turned unto God and changed, but the change begins here: 2 Cor. 7. 10. Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. 3. It makes Christ and Gods Word and Promises sweet unto us, and all Gods mercies to relish well, as hunger makes us relish our meat, and thirst our drinke: Pro. 27. 7. The full soule loatheth an hony-combe, but to the hungry soule every bitter thing is sweet. The Prodigall, when hee had been pinched with hunger, would have bin glad with all his heart to have fared as his fathers servants did, Luke 15. 19. O what sweetnes found Paul in Christ! I determined (saith hee) not to know

know any thing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, 1 Cor. 2. 2. And what made his taste so good? He had bin deeply humbled in sense of his finnes, as appeares plainly by this, that he counted himselfe lesse than the least of all Saints, Ephes. 3. 8. and the chiefest of all the sinners that Christ came to save, 1 Tim. 1. 15. And what sweetness did David finde in Gods Word and Promises? Psal. 119. 103. How sweet are thy words unto my taste? yea, sweeter than hony to my mouth. And how came he to this? O he had bin greatly humbled with sense of sin, as appeares, Psal. 40. 12. Innumerable evils have compassed mee about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the haire of mine head, therefore my hart faileth me. Yea, this makes all Gods mercies relish well, & our hearts to rejoyce & be thankful for them: a farthing

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token is to a very poore man most acceptable. This we shall see in *Jacobs* example, he vowed great thankfulness to God, if he would give him but *bread to eate, and raiment to put on*, as we see, *Gen. 28. 20.* because he was so humbled in the sense of his owne unworthinesse, and could say, *Gen. 32. 10. I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies.*

4. It makes them seeke to God more earnestly, and pray more fervently. As it is said of our Saviour himselfe, *Luke 22. 44. that being in an agony, hee prayed more earnestly*; his inward abasement through anguish of soule did adde much to the fervency of his prayer. So it is also with all his members; they never pray so fervently, as when they are most humbled & afflicted in spirit: *Lord, in trouble have they visited thee* (saith the Prophet, *Esay 26. 16.*) *they poured out a prayer, when thy chastening was upon them.*

5. And

ing. And lastly, it makes a man fit to walke and converse with God; no man can be fit to doe so till then. *Micah 6. 8.* the Lord requires wee should *humble our selves to walke with our God.* We can never walke nor converse with God, till we can humble our selves. And that both, 1. In respect of the Lord, who cannot delight to converse with any, till he be humbled: as no great man will be familiar with a sawcy unmannerly foole, that knowes not how to carry himselfe before his betters, nor to give due respect unto him. God cannot abide that flesh should glary in his presence, *1 Cor. 1. 29. & 2 Sam. 22. 28.* The afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou maist bring them downe. The more we are humbled in our selves, the more the Lord delights in us, to be, and converse with us. *Though the Lord bee high* (saith the Psalmist,

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Psalmist, *Psal. 138. 6.*) yet hath he respect unto the lowly, but the proud he knowes a farre off. And, *Esay 57. 15.* He will dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit.

2. In respect of our selves we are never fit to walk with God, till we be truly humbled. We cannot serve God, so as to please him, till we can doe it with reverence and feare, *Hebr. 12. 28.* Till then wee cannot heare the Word as wee should. *All thy Saints are in thine hands* (saith *Moses, Deut. 33. 3.*) and they are humbled at thy feet, to receive thy words. Till then we can never pray as we should. Till we can consider *God is in the heaven*, (of high and incomprehensible majesty) and we upon earth, base and vile wormes, we shall be apt to be rash with our mouthes, and our heart will bee hasty to utter any thing before God, as *Solomon speaketh, Eccle. 5. 2.* Till then men will never be fearfull

to

Serm. 4.

to offend him : No, we can never know him nor our selves rightly, till we have bin soundly humbled. *I have heard of thee* (saith Job, chap. 42. 4.) *by the hearing of the eare, but now mine eye seeth thee.* Job had a true and saving knowledge of God before (as hee had also bin truly humbled in soule before) but nothing to that he had, when God had thorowly humbled him. And so it is said of *Manasseh*, 2 Chron. 33. 12, 13. That when he was in affliction, and had humbled himselfe greatly, then *Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.* Till then we cannot yeeld any acceptable and constant obedience unto God. Jer. 44. 10. *They are not humbled even unto this day, neither have they feared nor walked in my Law, nor in my Statutes that I set before you, and before your fathers.*

SERMON

Sermon.

The first sermon preached at the funeral of the late King Charles the first



SERMON V.

OCTOB. XII.

MDCXXV.

Use.



Wo Uses this Do-
ctrine serveth unto
principally : First,
for exhortation, and
then for comfort.

I.

And first, to exhort us, that we
would all of us strive to attaine
to this grace that *David* here
speaketh of, and hath bin com-
mended unto us in this Do-
ctrine : that is, to be able to af-
flict our owne soules with godly
sorrow. And for my better pro-
ceeding in handling of this use,
& for the help of your memory &
edification, I will deliver unto
you, **I.** The motives, whereby
you may be provoked to seeke
this

this grace. 2. The meanes you must use for the attaining of it. 3. The signes and tokens whereby you may discern it.

First, Motives, I say: for you had need to have forcible reasons shewed you why you should desire it. None of us desire it as we ought; most men abhorre all sorrow: they put farre away the evill day, *Amos 6.3.* and give themselves to all means of mirth that they can devise, *Amos 6.5, 6.* And even in these times, wherein the Lord by so many meanes calls to mourning and to weeping, behold joy and gladnesse, every where as it was in the Prophets time, *Esay 22.12, 13.* Every mans heart is in the house of mirth, *Eccles. 7.4.* You had need therefore have forcible motives given you to perswade you to seek and labour for godly sorrow, for an afflicted and humbled heart. In the stone of the kidney or bladder men need not be perswaded to desire

or

Serm. 5.

or seeke remedy, but in the stone of the heart they doe.

Motive 1.

First, consider the examples of Gods servants, whom God in his Word hath commended to us, and whom *wee count happy men*, as the Apostle speaketh, *Jam. 5. 11*. and we shall see they were men of tender hearts, they were deeply humbled, and much given to mourning and weeping for their sinnes. *David* was much given to weeping for sin; hee spent whole nights in weeping abundantly, *Psal. 6. 6*. And *Peter*, when he repented, *wept bitterly*, *Mat. 26. 75*. And *Paul* was so humbled all his daies for the sins he committed before his calling, that he counted himselfe not worthy to be called an Apostle, *1 Cor. 15. 9*. Yea, he judged himself *lesse than the least of all Saints*, *Ephes. 3. 8*. Yea, they have bin brought to the very point and brinke of despaire before they could come to comfort. So was *Asaph*, when hee cryed

cryed, *Psal. 73. 26. My flesh and my heart faileth. And so was Heman, when hee complained, Psal. 88. 15. While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted. And so was David also, when he said thus in his prayer unto God, Ps. 40. 12. Mine iniquities have taken hold upon mee, so as I am not able to looke up: they are more than the haire of my head, therefore my heart faileth mee.*

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But these were fouler sinners (thou wilt say) than ever thou wert. I will shew thee therefore examples of such as whose sinnes were as small as thine. *Job* was never tainted with so foule sinnes as thou hast been; and yet his eyes were wont to poure out teares unto God, *Job 16. 20.* He for that very frowardness & impatience he shewed in so great affliction, abhorred himselfe, and repented in dust and ashes, *Job 42. 6.* *David*s heart was so soft and tender, that it smote him when he had but cut off

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off the skirt of *Sauls* garment, *1 Sam. 24. 5.* The poore man, whole childe *Christ* dis-possessed, burst out into teares even for the weaknesse of his faith, *Mar. 9. 24.* *Paul* was marvelously humbled even for his originall sinne: *Rom. 7. 24.* *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver mee from the body of this death?*

Consider these examples well, and thou must needs conclude with thy selfe: 1. Surely, it must needs be a good thing: 2. Surely, it must needs be a necessary thing, that all Gods people have bin so much given unto. Surely, I have as much cause as they had to weep, and be deeply humbled for my sins.

But I will give thee another example farre greater than all these: thy blessed Saviour that had no sinne, was much given to mourning and weeping for the sins that thou and such as thou are have committed, *Mar. 3. 5.*

He

Serm. 5.

He mourned for the hardnesse of the hearts even of his enemies; *He wept over Jerusalem,* Luke 19. 41. *His soule was exceeding sorrowfull unto death,* Matth. 26. 38. *Hee offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and teares,* Hebrewes 5. 7.

Say not; I have the lesse cause to grieve for my sins, because he grieved so much for them: *Esay 53. 4. Surely he hath borne our griefes, and carried our sorrows.* For thou must become conformable unto him in his sufferings, or thou shalt never have comfort in them, *Rom. 8. 29. & 6. 5.*

Say therefore to thine owne soule, If all Gods people have bin so apt to weep and mourne, what am I?

But before I proceed to the second Motive, two questions and doubts must bee answered that may arise from the first.

Can I not be in the state of grace,

Obj. 1.

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grace, unlesse I match these examples, and be so tender hearted, and apt to mourne as they?

Answ. I.

I answer, first, thou mayest. All Gods children have not been humbled; nor broken in heart in the same measure and degree; and two reasons there be of the difference:

First, in the persons themselves. Some of them have beene more hainous sinners than others. And according to the proportion of mens finnes, hath and must bee the measure of mens humiliation. The hainouser the sinne, the deeper, and of the longer continuance must the sorrow be.

Of *Manasseh* it is said, *2 Chro.* 33. 12. *Hee humbled himselfe greatly before God.* Of *David*, *Psal.* 51. 8. that his anguish and sorrow for sinne, was like to the paine a man feeleth that hath his bones broken. Of *Mary Magdalen*, that shee wept so abundantly as she could wash Christs feet

feet with her teares, *Luk. 7. 38.*

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Thinke upon this thou that hast been guilty of murther, persecution, whoredome, or such like hainous sinnes, thy sorrow must bee proportionable to the hainoulnesse of thy sinnes.

The second reason of the difference is in the Lord, who is the onely worker and giver of this grace. For as in other graces hee is pleased to give them in greater measure to some of his elect, than to others (*Mat. 13. 23.* In some elect ground, the seede of the Word yeelds but thirty, in some sixtie, in some in hundred fold:) so is it in this.

Ordinarily the Lord useth by the spirit of bondage, and legall terrors, to prepare men to their conversion, and deeply to humble them, to give them the spirit of bondage, *Rom. 8. 15.* But wee read of no such thing in the first conversion of *Matthew*, though hee had beene a Publican. For at his very first conversion

Serm. 5.

conversion he made a great feast to Christ, *Matth. 9. 9, 10.* nor in those that *Peter* converted; for though they were pricked in their hearts, and deeply humbled before they beleaved, *Acts 2. 37.* yet did their sorrow and feare continue nothing so long upon them as *David's* did: they quickly attained to comfort, in the assurance of pardon, *Act. 2. 41, 46.* *Lydia's* example I doe of purpose omit; for shee (though shee beleaved not in Christ till shee heard *Paul*, *Acts 16. 14.* yet) was converted and feared God before, *Ver. 13.*

Answ. 2.

Secondly, Yet I know this, that all Gods Elect, 1. Finde in themselves this humiliation, even with legall terrours, at one time or other. For Christ was sent to preach the Gospel to none but to the broken-hearted, to the captives, to the bruised, *Luke 4. 18.* that is, to such as had the spirit of bondage, *Romanes 8. 15.*

2. All

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2. All Gods faithfull and true hearted people are in some true measure humbled, and can mourne, and afflict their sonles for sinne; for they are all oft in Scripture stiled by this title: They are called *the humble*, *Psal. 34. 2. An afflicted & poble people*, *Zeph. 3. 12. The poore of the flocke*, *Zech. 11. 7, 11.* Poore (he means) in spirit, *Mat. 5. 3. Psal. 34. 6.* Thirdly, they hold themselves bound to aime at the best markes, and to strive to be like them that have most excelled in this grace of brokennesse of spirit, and ability to mourne for sin. *Phil. 3. 17. Brethren, be followers together of mee, and marke them that walk so, as yee have us for an ensample.* Thou art then in a wofull case, if thou neither canst mourne for thy sin, nor strivest to doe it.

But yet there is a second question to be resolved. For we hear (may some say) that *Job*, and *David*, and *Peter*, and *Paul*, and *Hezekiah*,

Quest. 2.

Serm. 5.

Hezekiah, and *Josiah*, and Christ have bin much given to weeping; in their mourning for sinne they have wept much. Can I not be in the state of grace? can I not have truly repented, nor bin humbled for my sinne, unlesse I can doe as they did, unlesse I can weep for my sinne?

Answ. 1.

Answer: First, That the grieve and mourning for sinne be absolutely necessary unto unfained repentance, teares are not alwayes so. And I will shew you two reasons of the difference that is to be observed between Gods people in this point.

First, The constitution of some mens bodies makes them much more unapt to weep than others are.

Secondly, The very extremity of grieve sometimes so oppresseth and overwhelmeth mens hearts (as *David* complaineth of himself, *Psal.* 143. 4. *My spirit is overwhelmed within mee,*

my

Serm. 3.

my heart within mee is desolate) as they cannot ease themselves either by words or teares. Gods people have beene oft in that extremitie of griefe, as they could not pray, I meane not expresse in words the desires of their heart, but with sighes and groanings, *Rom. 8. 26.* In extremity of sorrow some men cannot weepe, It is laid of *David* and his company, *1 Sam. 30. 4.* they had no more power to weepe. So that I may say to thee, that if thou canst, by the signes, that I shall by and by give thee, approve that thou art able soundly to mourne, and be humbled for thy finnes, though thou canst not weepe for them, thou mayst bee in the face of grace for all that.

But secondly, I answer, That if the constitution of thy body will serve thee to weepe for other things, and yet thou couldst never weepe for thy sins, surely thy case is fearefull. As to the

Answ. 2.

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man

Serm. 5.

man that can remember other things well enough, a tale, a play, but a Sermon, a Chapter of the Bible he cannot remember, and excuseth the matter thus, my memory is naught, I may say it is naught indeed with a witness, it is surely, it is damnably naught; so to thee that canst weepe for other things, but not for sinne, I may say, flatter not thy selfe, but strive to bee able to doe as thou hearest other the good servants of God have done, and that God hath beene so highly pleased with them for, strive to bee able to weepe for thy finnes.

Motive

2.

Promise

1.

The second motive to perswade you to seeke for this grace, is the consideration of the manifold promises God hath made in his Word to them that can afflict their soules, and bee rightly humbled for finnes, and the great benefit that this grace will bring with it.

First, thus sorrow shall not be everlasting,

Serm. 5.

everlasting, Rev. 7. 17. but it shall end in comfort: Job. 16. 20.

Yee shall be sorrowfull, but your sorrow shall bee turned into joy.

Psal. 126. 5. They that sow in teares, shall reape in joy. It is

appointed unto them that mourn in Zion, that they shall have

the oyle of joy given them for their mourning, the garment of

praise for the spirit of heaviness, Esa. 61. 3. The Lord who

is the father of mercies, and God of all consolation, is calld a

God that comforteth all those that are cast downe, 2 Cor. 7. 6.

Never found Gods people that comfort in Gods mercie, and in

the assurance of the pardon of their sinnes, as when they have

beene most humbled, and able to weep most for their sins: Esa.

29. 19. The meeke shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the

poore among men shall rejoyce in the holy one of Israel. The day

of humiliation, when Gods people afflict their soules before

Serm. 5.

him, is called a day of atonement, *Levit. 23. 27.* For so is Gods promise, *Zech. 13. 1.* In that day there shall bee a fountaine opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sinne, and for uncleannesse.

First, no man neede feare he shall bring-himselfe to desperation, if hee give way to this tendernesse of heart, and sorrowing for sinne. For there is no such medicine in the world to free thy heart from legall, and desperate feares, and sorrowes, and to bring thy heart to sweete peace, and comfort in God, as this is, if thou couldst rightly mourne, and bee humbled for thy sinne. When those poore wretches that had crucified Christ, and were pricked in their hearts with intolerable feares, and sorrowes, and anguish of soule for it, and cryed out to the Apostles, *What shall wee doe?* *Act. 2. 37.* marke what

what remedie *Peter* prescribes them, verse 38. *Repent*, saith he. Why? Did they not repent already, of that they had done? Yes, with legall repentance for endangering themselves; but his meaning is, Repent and mourne that you have offended God. And indeed so is Gods promise. *Esa. 57. 15. I will dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* He may be sure to have his heart revived and comforted, that can be humbled enough.

Secondly, yea there is no such remedy against worldly sorrow as this; if when we feele our hearts dejected with any sorrow for any worldly crosse, wee would labour to turne our heart from the consideration of the crosse, to the consideration of our sinne that hath beene the cause of it. And this remedy you shall find prescribed, *Lam. 3. 29.*

Serm. 5. *Wherefore doth a living man
complaine, (chafe, and fret, and
disquiet himselfe) a man for
the punishment of his sinnes?
let us search and trie our
wayes.*

Applic.

I beseech you lay this second
Motive to your hearts every one
of you. First, many of you never
yet had any comfort in God, in
the assurance of the pardon of
your sins, never found sweetnesse
in Christ nor in Gods promises.
Secondly, many of you are much
disquieted with legall & despe-
rate feares. Thirdly, many of you
are alwayes heavie hearted,
sometimes by reason of crosses
you meete with, and sometimes
you know not why. And what
is the true cause of all this? You
were never yet rightly humbled
for your sinnes. Why will you
continue in this uncomfortable
estate? Learne to mourne and
weepe for thy sinnes, and that
will helpe all.

Promise

2.

The second promise made
unto

Serm. 5.

unto it, and benefit this sorrow will bring, is, that it will make us capable of, and able to thrive in every saving grace. This benefit you shall finde pressed as a motive unto this, 1 Pet. 5. 5, 6. *God giveth grace to the humble: humble your selves therefore* (saith the Apostle) *under the mighty hand of God. Jam. 4. 6, 7, 9. God giveth grace to the humble; submit your selves therefore to God, bee afflicted, and mourne, and weepe.* Men use not to come to the rocke to bee well grounded, and settled in grace, till they have digged deepe, Luk. 6. 48. Such shall attaine to a cleare, and certaine, and sanctified knowledge of the truth: Psal. 25. 9. *The humble he will teach his way.* Such shall get power over their corruptions: 2 Cor. 7. 10. *Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. Eccl. 7. 3. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadnesse*

Serm. 5.

of the countenance, the heart is made better. These teares are of a purging, and cleansing nature; no soape, no nitre is so effectually to get the spots and staines out of cloth, as these are to wash out the spots of thy soule. That which Salomon saith of a slanderer, *Prov. 25. 23. An angry countenance will drive him away*; may bee said of this: if sinne be not cockerd and made much of, if we would shew our selves discontented, sad, and heauie, while it carrieth with us, this would drive it away.

Applic.

Take this also to heart, I pray you. First, many of you complaine, or have just cause to complaine, you thrive not in any saving grace, you are like Pharaohs leane kine, though you live in never so good pasture, yet are you still as ill favoured, and leane as ever you were, *Gen. 41. 19. 21.*

Secondly, many of you are extremely ignorant, and unsetled in

in your religion, unstable soules;
as the Apostle speakes, 2 *Pet.*
3. 16.

Serm. 5.

Thirdly, many of you com-
plaine you cannot overcome nor
get power over any corruption;
you cry with the Apostle
(though not with that successe
that he did) *Rom. 7. 15. That*
which I doe, I allow not; for
what I would, that I do not; but
what I hate, that do I. Learne to
know the true cause of all this;
you were never yet rightly hum-
bled for sin. If thou couldst be
humbled, and learne to mourne
for thy sinne, God would give
thee more grace.

Thirdly, the Lord hath pro-
mised his speciall protection, as-
sistance and mercy in the evill
day, (the day of his wrath, and
judgements,) unto such as are
rightly humbled, and can
mourne for their sins, *Ps. 18. 27.*
Thou wilt save the afflicted peo-
ple: & 34. 8. He saveth such as
be of a contrite spirit, Job 22. 29.

Promise

3.

I 5

When

Serm. 5. *When men are cast downe, then thou shalt say, there is a lifting up, he shall save the humble person. And this promise God hath beene wont to make good, one of these three wayes.*

First, either by turning away the judgement that hee had threatned, as *2 Chron. 32. 26. Hezechia humbled himselfe for the pride of his heart (both hee, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem) so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the dayes of Hezechia. Yea to shew what sound humiliation is able to do, the very counterfeite of it hath beene very effectuall this way for the turning away of judgements: 2 Chron. 12. 12. When Roboboam humbled himselfe, the wrath of the Lord turned from him, so that he would not destroy him altogether, and also in Judah things went well. The like we may see in the example of a worse man than he, 1 King. 21. 29. Seest thou how*
Ahab

Ahab humbleth himselfe before mee? therefore I will not bring the evill in his dayes.

Serm. 9.

Or secondly, by hiding his servants from the judgment, and providing for their safety in the common calamity, as hee did just Lot, that was vexed with the filthy conversation of the Sodomites, 2 Pet. 2. 7. This our God can doe: verſ. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of tentations; for to him belong the issues of death, Psal. 68. 10.*

Or thirdly, (if hee see it not good to do either of the former) by sealing them, and setting his marke upon them; giving them by his Spirit further assurance of his favour, and strength of grace to indure the calamity (for that is Gods seale, and marke, Eph. 1. 13.) and so did the Lord with those humbled soules that went into captivity: Ezek. 9. 4. *Goe through the midst of the Citie, through the*

Serm. 5. *the midst of Jerusalem, and set a marke upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations that bee done in the midst thereof.*

Applic.

Consider well of this benefit, I pray you. First, wee live now in an evill time: The plague hath devoured many thousands already; and wee all may see cause enough to feare, it may come neerer to every one of us than yet it hath done.

Secondly, the Lord doth also threaten us with the sword. You have heard of the intentions of our enemies abroad.

Thirdly, all mens hearts are disquieted with feare; few have any inward peace, and security, in their minds. Learne therefore to know how wee might remedy this. Certainly if wee could learne to afflict our selves, and mourne for our sins, wee need not feare either the plague, or the Papists: God would be a refuge for us, a re-
fuge

fuge in times of trouble. *Pf. 9. 9.*
 O that Gods people throughout
 the land could humble them-
 selves more for sin, for the sins of
 the land, and for their owne sins.
 O that wee could do it, that are
 here now. Remember what is
 said, *Prov. 14. 26.* In the feare of
 the Lord is strong confidence,
 and his children shall have a
 place of refuge.

Fourthly, the Lord hath pro-
 mised that the prayers of such
 shall prevaile mightily with
 him, both for themselves and
 others. You know what is said of
 Jacob, *Hos. 12. 4.* He had power
 over the Angel, and prevailed;
 he wept and made supplications
 unto him. And of Hezekiah,
Esa. 38. 5. I have heard thy
 prayers, I have seene thy teares,
 behold I will adde unto thy daies
 15. yeares. And what need wee
 more examples, when wee have
 the Lords expresse Word & pro-
 mise for this? *Psal. 10. 17.* Lord
 thou hast heard the desire of
 the

Serm. 5.

Promise
 4

Serm. 5.

the humble, thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine eare to heare, Psal. 34. 17. When the prophet had said, The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them, hee giveth this for the reason, vers. 18. The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken heart. 2 Chron. 7. 14. If my people that are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, shen will I heare from Heaven. Yea for others also God will heare them: Job 43. 8. My servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept.

Applic.

First, wee all complaine, and not without cause, as Job did, Chap. 30. 20. I cry unto thee, and thou dost not heare mee: I stand up, and thou regardest me not.

Secondly, and wee account it (if we be as we should bee) the chiefe priviledge, and comfort wee have in this life, to have audience and respect with God in our prayers: 1 Job. 5. 14. This is the

the confidence that wee have in
him, that if we aske any thing
according to his will, he heareth
us.

Serm. 5.

Thirdly, take notice of a
chiefe cause thereof: and as thou
desirest God should have more
respect to thy prayers, la-
bour thou to be more
humbled for thy
sinnes.

SERMON

Serm. 6.



SERMON VI.

NOVEMB. IX.

M.DC.XXV.

Motive

3.



Followeth now the third and last motive; that this is the best way to prevent the Lord from afflicting, and humbling our soules with his owne hand, when wee have learned to humble, and afflict our owne soules. For this is a certaine truth; sinne will bring sorrow sooner or later, that cannot bee avoided. Sinne is therefore called sorrow; because sorrow is an inevitable effect, and consequent of it: *Eccl. 11.* When hee had said, *vers. 9. Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheere thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walke in the waies*

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waies of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgement: he addes ver. 10. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evill from thy flesh. Where sinne hath gone before, sorrow (even sorrow and affliction of soule for sinne) will follow: Prov. 29. 6. In the transgression of a wicked man there is a snare; that is, that that will fill their hearts with deadly sorrow and heavinesse, as appears by the next words, but the righteous sing, and rejoyce. Jer. 2. 19. Thine owne wickednesse shall correct thee, know therefore, and see that it is an evill thing, & bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my feare is not in thee. Thy sins certainly will be bitter to thee one day, sooner or later. Take this for an undoubted truth, thou must either temporally here, or eternally hereafter in hell, lament, & bewaile

Serm. 6. bewaile, and weepe for thy sins :
Luk. 13. 28. There shall bee weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, when yee shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets, in the Kingdome of God, and your selves thrust out.. How much more when they shall see and feele the torments that are prepared in hell for them? Now when God as an angry Judge strikes, and afflicts the soule with sorrow for sinne, even in this life; O that sorrow is terrible, and intolerable; when he finites the heart, he so sets it on as no man is able to abide it: Heb. 10. 31. It is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Prov. 18. 14. A wounded spirit (that is, which God in his anger hath wounded) who can beare? Nah. 1. 6. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fiercenesse of his anger? his fury is powered out like fire, and

and the rockes are throwne downe by him. Serm. 6.

And the best way to prevent the Lord from wounding, and afflicting our soules, is to smite and afflict our owne hearts for our sinnes; the way to prevent those intolerable, and everlasting sorrowes which God in his fury will bring upon wicked men, is to worke our hearts to this godly sorrow our selves, and to humble our owne soules: this is plaine by that speech of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 11. 31. *If wee would judge our selves, wee should not bee judged: Of the Lord, he meanes, as appears in the next verse.*

O thinke of this thou merry Greeke, that art all for mirth, and pleasure; thou drunkard, and whoremaster, that findest such joy, and sweetnesse in thy sin; thou pleasant witted fellow, that canst so wittily breake jests upon religion, and the servants of God, that thou canst set all the company

Applio.

Serm. 6. company on laughing; the time will come when thy sins, which thou canst not abide to think of, shall be set in order before thine eyes, that thou shalt not be able to looke off from them, they shall never out of thy thought, *Psal. 50. 21.* Thou that canst not abide to heare of thy finnes, nor to be told of them, nor reprov'd for them by any of Gods servants, who are (as *Elihu* speakes, *Job 33. 6, 7, 8.*) in Gods stead unto thee, formed out of the clay as well as thy selfe: whose terror need not make thee afraid; shalt one day heare the Lord himselfe reprov'g thee for them: *Psal. 50. 21.* I will reprove thee, saith he. And that will bee such a kinde of reprov'g as is mentioned, *Psal. 2. 5.* Then shall he speake to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure; better to have an hundred of Gods poore servants to reprove thee, than to have the Lord do it. Thou that canst not abide

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abide to let any sadnesse or sorrow for sinne to come neere thy heart, but hatest sorrow as the Devill, and abandonest it from thee with all thy might, do what thou canst, sooner or later it will feize upon thee. When Gods servants (that have beene much given to mourning for sinne) shall sing for joy of heart, thou shalt crie for sorrow of heart, and howle for vexation of spirit; Esa. 65. 14. Luk. 6. 25. Woe unto you that laugh now; for yee shall mourne and weepe.

Yea, secondly, thinke of this all you that feare God; were it not much better for you to take paines with your owne hearts, to humble and afflict them, than to leave it to God to doe it in his wrath? You have heard hee will certainly doe it, if you doe it not; and the way to prevent him from doing it, is to doe it your selves.

And these are the motives that may

Serm. 6. may stirre up in every one of us a desire to seeke for this grace, of an humbled and broken heart.

*Meanes
of two
sorts.*

It followeth now, that I shew you the meanes whereby you may attaine it. And these are of two sorts:

First, some, such as wherein you must use the helpe of others.

Secondly, some, such as wherein you must bee the agents your selves.

I Sort.

Of the first sort, I will name to you, but two.

I.

The first is the ministry of the Word. If thou wouldst have a soft heart, able to mourne for sin, thou must conscionably frequent the faithfull ministry of the Word, strive to live under a forcible ministry, such as will search thy heart. No meanes in the world have ever wrought so mightily to the saving, humbling, and afflicting of the soule, as this hath done. By this means they

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they (that had crucified Christ, and were so hardened in their sinne, that when they saw that wonderfull miracle, even the Apostles that were poore Galileans, speake in all languages the wonderfull things of God, *they mocked them, and said, these men are full of wine, Act. 2. 13.*) were so pricked and wounded in their hearts, that they knew not what to doe, till the same hand that wounded them had healed them againe, as you may read, *Act. 2. 37, 41.* And what was it that brought David to such a saving sense of his sinne in numbring of the people, that his heart smote him for it, and hee cryed, *I have sinned greatly in that I have done, I have done very foolishly? 2 Sam. 24. 10.* Surely God had sent Gad the Prophet unto him, as you may see in the next words, *vers. 12.* For when David was up in the morning the Word of the Lord came unto the Prophet Gad, Davids

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Dauids Seer, saying, &c. And though it be said of *Manasseh*, *2 Chron. 33. 12.* that when he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himselfe greatly before him: yet if you looke into the 18. verse of that Chapter, you shall finde, he had a mightier and stronger mean to worke that humiliation in his heart, than his affliction was: the Lord had sent to him *Seers, and Prophets that spake unto him in the name of the Lord.* His affliction was but a subordinate meanes, to make him the better able to receive profit by the word; the words and ministry of the Seers, was that that wrought this mighty work. There is more force in the ministry of the Word, to worke sound and saving humiliation, than in all the afflictions in the world. *Psal. 94. 12.* *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy Law.* See a notable experiment

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riment of this in *Rehoboam*, and the Princes of Judah, *2 Chron.*

12.2—6. When God had for their apostasie sent *Shishak* King of Egypt with a mighty and invincible army against them, and brought them thereby into extreme perill and distresse, hee sent *Shemajah* the Prophet unto them, to declare unto them the true cause of that judgement, and to bring them to an effectuall sight and sense of their sinne, and then (not before) *they humbled themselves, and confessed that the Lord was righteous.* Gods judgements and corrections, without the Word, use not to worke savingly. Indeed, they serve, *1.* To prepare & make the heart fitter to receive and profit by the word. *2.* To stirre up those sparkes, and make them to burn, which the Word had before cast into the heart, and were covered as with ashes; but without the Word, they use not to worke savingly. But the Word, even

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without

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without affliction hath done mighty things this way: *Jerem. 23.29. Is not my Word like as a fire, saith the Lord? and like a hammer that breaketh the rocke in pieces?* Wouldst thou then have thy heart softened? Bring it to this fire; if it be as hard as iron, it will soften it, and make it pliable: bring it to this anvil where the hammer smiteth, and it will breake it. For first, this is ordained and sanctified of God to be a glasse, that will cleerly and evidently discover to us all our spots and deformities, as the Apostle teacheth us, *James 1.23.* Secondly, God hath promised to accompany this ordinance of his with the divine power and efficacy of his holy Spirit: *I will be with you* (saith our Saviour, *Mat. 28.20.*) *unto the end of the world.* And therefore it is no marvell though it be so mighty this way.

Object.

A likely matter will you say: for where have you harder and profaner

profaner hearts, than such as are daily beaten upon by this hammer?

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I answer : First, that the hardened and reprobate heart is made the harder by the strokes of this hammer, specially such hearts as once were softened, and are growne hard againe : even as the Smiths iron is. To some the Word is a *savour of death unto death*, 2 Cor. 2.16.

Ans. 1.

Secondly, the true cause why so many heare us daily, and their hearts are never a whit mollified by it, is this : In many of our hearers the Lord workes not with us ; no, alas, in these dayes the Lord workes with us but in few ; and if he be not with us, if he worke not with us, we can do nothing. When God bade *Moses* take his rod, and smite the rocke in Horeb, he told him he would stand before him on the rocke ; and then when God stood upon the rocke, *Moses* smote the rocke, and water gush

Ans. 2.

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shed out of it abundantly, *Exod.* 17. 5, 6. If God had not been there, *Moses* smiting the rocke would have done nothing: so is it in this case.

Answ. 3.

Thirdly, this I say, That such as God hath in mercy ordained to give a soft heart unto, shall feele their hearts mollified more by this, than by any other meanes. And if this will not soften thy heart, I assure thee nothing will doe it.

Applic.

I.

This being so, Oh that wee, who are Gods Ministers, would more diligently & carefully apply our selves to this worke, and stirre up our selves in our Ministry, not only to reprove sin, but to do it feelingly and conscionably, so as may be most effectually to bring Gods people to sound humiliation for sinne. If we would bring them to lament for sin, we must mourne to them our selves, as our Saviour speaketh, *Matth.* 11. 17. and not by our Epicurisme and riotous lives
proclaime

proclaime unto them, that wee are farre from having humbled soules in our selves for our owne finnes.

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2.

And, Oh that you that are Gods people would seek for and desire this helpe from us in our Ministry, to soften your hearts, and further you in this worke of humiliation of soule for sinne. Certainly, you should desire and seek for all good helps this way. When God denounced against his people the heauie judgement of the Babylonish captivity, and provokes them to humiliation & repentance for the preventing of it: *Consider yee* (saith he, *Jer. 9. 17, 18.*) *and call for the mourning women, that they may come, and send for cunning women, that they may come, & let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may runne downe with teares, and our eyelids gush out with waters.* He alludes to the custome they had in funerals, and such occasions of

K 3 mourning

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mourning, to hire certaine women, that by their skill in singing dolefull songs might increase their heaviness, and make them more apt to mourne. But his meaning is to teach them, that in such a time as that was, wherein they had also just cause to mourne and humble themselves, they should use all the best helpes they could to provoke themselves unto sorrow. And surely, we should all learne to doe so in this case, seeing humiliation for sinne is so necessary, and the ministry of the Word is a singular meanes to work our hearts to it; we should therefore desire (so far as the good order that God hath established in his Church will permit) to heare such as whose ministry is most powerfull and effectuell for the softning of a hard heart.

The second meane, wherein we must use the help of others, is the benefit of private admonition and reproofe. They that would

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would have their hearts softened to be able to mourne and weep for sinne, must not be unwilling to be admonished and reprov'd for sinne in private by some faithfull friend, either Minister or other, but count it a great benefit, and desire it rather.

First, certainly God hath given authority and a straight charge to all his people to watch one over another, & to call upon, & admonish, & reprove one another: *Heb. 10. 24. Let us consider one another, so provoke unto love and to good works. 2 Thes. 3. 15. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. Levit. 19. 17. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sinne upon him.*

Secondly, God hath sanctified & ordained this for a meanes to reclaime poore sinners, to bring them to a saving sight and sense of their sin, and keep them

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from hardning their hearts in it: *Mat. 18. 15.* If thy brother shall trespasse against thee, goe, and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall heare thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if not, then (*Ver. 16, 17.*) take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if hee shall neglect to heare them, tell it unto the Church; but if hee neglect to heare the Church, let him bee to thee as a Heathen man, and a Publicane: as if hee had said, count not his case desperate till this course have bin taken with him.

Thirdly, God hath oft blessed this course wonderfully: *Mal. 3. 16.* Then they that feared the Lord spake oft one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a booke of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

This

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This was the meane whereby Gods people were kept from the prophanenesse and security of those times, and God was wonderfully pleased with it. Yea, many a heart hath bin mollified this way, which the publike Ministry could not soften *Nathans* private dealing with *David* prevailed more with him, than all the publike meanes hee had enjoyed in a whole year, 2 *Sam.*

12. 7, 13.

Fourthly, count it therefore a great blessing of God to thee, to have such a friend or such a Minister as will watch over thee, and deale thus privately and plainly with thee: yea, seeke for such friends. It is said of *Jonathan*, 1 *Sam.* 20. 8. that he had brought *David* into a covenant of the Lord with him. Wee should labour to get such friends as we might make this covenant with. Yea, we should beg of God to give us such a friend: *Psa.* 141. 5. *Let the righteous smite mee,*

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it shall be a kindnesse; and let him reprove mee, it shall be an excellent oyle that shall not breake my head. And wee have all great need of it: for selfe-love so blindes us, as wee cannot see that that is amisse in our selves. In these last times especially men shall be lovers of themselves, as the Apostle teacheth us, 2 Tim. 3. 2.

Applic.

And what marvell then if there be now adayes so much security and hardnesse of heart among Christians? No man holds himselfe bound to watch over his brother, to admonish or reprove him, but every man saith in his heart as Cain, Genes. 4. 9.

Am I my brothers keeper? The Papists shall rise up in judgment against us in this: for they take all opportunities to gaine others to Antichrist. They (like the Scribes and Pharisees, of whom our Saviour speaketh, Matthew 23. 15.) doe compasse sea and land to make one profelyte; but

we

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we have no care at all to gaine any unto Christ. And on the other side, all men are unwilling to be admonished and plainly dealt with in private, even by the Minister of God: but are apt to say to any that would admonish them, as the Sodomites did to Lot, *Ge. 19. 9. Stand back, this fellow will needs be a Judge.* But know for a certainty, that thou that art so unwilling to heare of thy sin, and to be plainly dealt with about it, art in love with thy sin, and hast no desire to bring thy heart to godly griefe and sorrow for it.

SERMON

Serm. 7.



SERMON VII.

DECEMBER. VII.

MDCXXV.

*Second
sort of
meanes.*



T followeth now that wee come to those meanes, wherein wee are to be principall agents our selves.

For though this (to speake properly) be the mighty worke of God, to humble and mollifie the heart of man, and make it able to mourn for sinne, according to that promise, *Ezek. 11. 19. I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them an heart of flesh*; yet may wee (after we are once regenerated) doe much to further this great worke of God in our selves. Therefore we see *David* professeth

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seth here, that *hee afflicted his owne soule* : and, *Psal. 69. 10.* that *he chastned his soule*. And of *Josiah* it is said, that *he did humble himselfe before God*, *2 Chron. 34. 27.* And of *Manasseh*, *2 Chro. 33. 12.* that *he humbled himselfe greatly before the God of his fathers*. Yea, Gods people are commanded in the day of their fast, *Levit. 23. 27.* to *afflict their owne soules* : and, *Joel 2. 13.* to *rend their hearts* : and, *Jerem. 4. 3, 4.* to *breake up their fallow ground, and to circumcise and take away the foreskinne of their owne hearts*. By all which places it appeareth, we may our selves doe much in this worke ; yea, that wee must be doers in it our selves, or else it will never be well done. And certainly, if we would doe what we might, our hearts would be much softer, and better able to mourne for our sinnes than they are.

If any of you shall aske mee,
Why,

Quest.

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Why, what can we doe? or what should wee doe to worke our hearts to this godly sorrow?

Answ.

I answer: There are foure principall things that wee may doe, and that wee must doe, if wee would get broken and humbled hearts. For, 1. Wee must make choice of a fit time. 2. Of a fit place. 3. When we have so done, we must examine our hearts seriously and impartially. 4. Wee must pray to God for his assistance in this businesse.

1. *A fit time.*

First, we must take a fit time to goe about this worke. For, though this bee but a matter of circumstance, yet have Gods people found much helpe unto spirituall duties even in this. *Daniel* for his private prayer made choice of the time that God had appointed for the evening sacrifice, *Dan. 9. 21.* And so did *Cornelius*, as will appeare, if you compare *Acts 10. 30.* and *31.* together. Our blessed Saviour made choice of the evening for

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for this purpose sometimes, *Mat. 14. 23.* and sometimes of the morning early before day, *Mar. 1. 35.* And as all our time is not to be spent in mourning, so are there some times and seasons fitter for this purpose, and such as will yeeld us more helpe in this worke than other some will doe. *Eccles. 3. 4. There is a time to weep, & a time to laugh; a time to mourne, and a time to dance.* And it is the wisdom of a Christian, to discern and take the fittest time for this purpose: *Eccles. 8. 5. A wise mans heart discerneth both time and judgement, saith Solomon. Eph. 5. 15, 16. Walke not as fooles, but as wise men, redeeming the time.* The wisdom of a man (you see) consisteth much in the husbanding of his time well, and making choice of the fittest time for every purpose and action that he takes in hand.

And what times are the fittest (may you say) for this purpose?

I answer,

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I answer, it is profitable for a man every day to bee doing somewhat in this worke by observing his owne wayes, and calling himselfe to an account for them. For,

First, the Apostle tells us we are in danger to bee hardned through the deceitfulnesse of sin, if we doe not exhort or stirre up our selves daily, *Heb. 3. 13.*

Secondly, the time of our death is very uncertaine : and such servants (we know) as have great dealings for their Master, and looke to be called to a strict account they know not how soone, will looke every day into their accounts, and have them in a readinesse continually. And surely, this is our case ; we know not how soone our accounts will be called for : *Marke 13. 35, 36. Watch ye therefore (for ye know not when the Master of the house will come) lest comming suddenly he find you sleeping.*

Thirdly, this would helpe us greatly

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greatly in our daily prayers unto God. The more sense and sorrow for sinne we have when we pray, the more acceptable certainly would our prayers be unto God. *Psal. 34.* when David had said, *Ver. 17. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them;* hee tells us, *Ver. 18.* what cries and prayers of the righteous they be that the Lord hath such respect unto: *The Lord is nigh (saith he) to them that are of a broken heart.* If we would strive in our daily prayers when wee make confession of our sins to do it with feeling, and not formally, it would not only make our prayers more effectually with God, but keep our hearts from hardning, and bring them to a good temper. *Luke 18. 13, 14.* when the Publican made confession of his sins with that feeling, *smiting upon his breast, & saying, God be mercifull to me a sinner;* it is said, *hee went home to his house justified rather than the other.*

Fourth-

Serna. 7.

Fourthly, this daily accustoming our selves unto this worke of calling our selves to account, and afflicting our hearts for our finnes, would make it more easie and familiar unto us, when wee shall have extraordinary occasion to betake our selves to it. That which is said by the Prophet of the Lords chastening of us, may fitly be applyed to this chastening of our selves: *Lam. 3. 27. It is good for a man that he beare the yoke in his youth; and to have bin accustomed to stoop unto, and to beare patiently the Lords afflicting hand.* By this that hath bin said, you see it is good for us to be doing somewhat in this worke every day.

*Five
times.*

Yet are there five speciall times and seasons that will yeeld us great helpe in this businesse more than other times will doe.

The first fit time to worke our hearts to godly sorrow, is presently after some fall wee have received,

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received, some grosse sinne wee have slipped into. A great advantage it will be unto us, to humble our soules for it presently and without delay.

For first, sinne newly committed may be better knowne and remembred with all the circumstances, whereby it is aggravated. And that is a great help to the humiliation of the soule, as wee may perceive in *Dauids* speech, *Psal. 51. 3. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sinne is ever before mee.*

Secondly, the heart will not bee so hardned by sinne that is newly committed, but more easily wrought upon and softened, than when sinne hath lyen long upon it: as a bone that is out of joynt, the longer it is neglected, will be set againe with more difficulty and paine. A Leopard may as soone leave his spots, an Ethiopian his blackness, as he can doe his sinne that hath lyen long in it, *Jer. 13. 23.*

Secondly,

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Secondly, another fit season for this worke is, when we prepare our selves to renew our covenant with God in the holy Sacrament.

For, 1. At that time God requires of us a speciall care to examine our selves, and call to mind our sins, and to judge our selves for them, else it is not possible we should receive worthily, *1 Corin. 11. 28, 29, 31. When thou bringest thy gift to the Altar* (saith our Saviour, *Mat. 5. 23.* as at the Lords Table wee doe offer and present our selves unto God, our soules and bodies as a holy, reasonable, and lively sacrifice unto him) *and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee.* Teaching us, that at that time specially wee should remember and call to minde what our brother, and much more what our heavenly Father hath against us.

2. At that time men (if they have any spark of grace in them)
are

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are apt to finde in themselves some stirrings of their affections unto goodnesse, some motions of Gods Spirit, some dispositions unto devotion, and remorse for sinne. Ministers that use to deale privately with their people at that time, shall find them more easie to be wrought upon (and so shall every man his own heart) than at other times. These good motions should be followed without delay. As it is said, that they that lay at the poole of Bethesda, strove to get in so soon as ever the Angel had stirred the water, *John 5.4.* and *Josuah*, so soone as God by a vision had stirred him up to search and find out the sin that had provoked God against Israel, *Jos. 7.16.* went without delay immediately about it: so should wee doe in this case. When wee feelee God begins to soften our hearts, & to stirre up these good dispositions to devotion in us, then should we set our selves seriously

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to this work of calling to mind our sins, and bringing our hearts to sorrow for them.

For, 1. When God stirres up such motions, he knockes at the doore of our hearts, and sheweth himselfe willing to enter in, *Rev. 3. 20.*

2. Satan will bee ready to quench the spirit in these good motions. As it is said, he watched the infant, to devoure it so soone as ever it should be borne, *Rev. 12. 4.*

Thirdly, the dayes and times we set apart for fasting & prayer (upon whatsoever just occasion) are a most fit season for us to goe about this worke.

For, 1. We find Gods people have had their hearts wonderfully softened at such times. The Israelites in the fast that they kept for successe against *Benjamin*, came into the house of God and wept, *Judg. 20. 26.* And in the fast they kept at *Mispeh* they wept so abundantly, that they are said,

said, 1 *Sam.* 7. 6. to have drawne water, as by buckets full, out of their hearts, and to have poured it out before the Lord.

2. This exercise of a religious fast is a great holpe and furtherance to this worke ; as we see here in *Dauids* example, *Psal.* 35. 13. *I humbled my selfe with fasting :* and, *Psal.* 69. 10. *I wept, and chastened my soule with fasting.*

Fourthly, when any judgements of God lye heaue upon our selves or our brethren, that is a fit season to goe about this worke. When these men were in misery, *David* fell here to afflicting of his soule, *Psa.* 35. 13.

For, 1. The Lord by every one of his judgements doth testifie from Heaven, that he hath matter against us, as *Naomi* saith, *Ruth* 1. 21. *Why doe you call mee Naomi, seeing the Lord (by taking away my husband and my children) hath testified against mee, and the Almighty*

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ty hath afflicted mee?

2. God by his judgements doth call upon us to examine our wayes, and humble our selves before him: *Hag. 1. 5, 6, 7.* Now therefore, saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your wayes; yee have sowne much, and brought in little; thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your wayes. And, *Esay 22. 12.* In that day did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping and to mourning.

3. God by his judgements softneth the hearts of men, and worketh in them more remorie, more pronenesse and aptnesse to repent, than at other times: *Job 23. 16.* God maketh my heart soft (saith Job) and the Almighty troubleth mee. A man shall find himselfe fitter to pray then, than at other times; and wee should take the advantage and opportunity of this time for it: *Jam. 5. 13.* Is any afflicted? let him pray. This hath bin oft seen even in many notable hypocrits, who

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who (how profane soever their hearts have been at other times, yet) in their affliction have found in themselves a disposition to pray, and to repent: *Psal.* 78.34. *When he slew them, then they sought him and returned: and, Esay* 26.16. *Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastning was upon them.* And we find by experience, that at such a time a faithfull Minister may much better worke upon the hearts of men, to bring them to remorse and repentance, than at another time; according to that speech of *Elihu*, *Job* 33. 22, 24. *When a mans soule draweth neere to the grave, if there bee then a messenger with him, an interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightnes, then hee is gracious unto him.* And so speaketh *David* also, *Psal.* 94.12. *Blessed is the man whom thou chastnest, O Lord, & teachest him out of thy Law.*

L

This

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This is a singular favour of God, when correction and instruction goe together. And herein we are bound to acknowledge the great mercy of God to our Land, that (in the time of so generall and grievous visitation as hath been upon it) hee hath put it into the Kings heart to command so much preaching, that thereby the hearts of the people might bee effectually wrought upon, now the Lord hath so by his judgement prepared them. And certainly, if in such a time the Word doe not worke upon mens hearts, it will never doe them good.

Fifthly and lastly, when wee feelee a secret pensivenesse and sadnesse to come upon our hearts, so as they even melt within us, like ground that thaweth after a frost, so as wee could even weep abundantly; this is an excellent season and opportunity to bring our hearts unto godly sorrow.

For,

For 1. sadnesse and heaviness
maketh the heart more apt to be
wrought to goodnes: *Eccles. 7. 3.*
Sorrow is better than laughter:
for by the sadnesse of the counte-
nance the heart is made better.

2. This is the way to turne
the streame and current of our
sorrow the right way, by making
our sin our greatest sorrow (as in-
deed it ought to be) because it is
the onely just cause of all other
our sorrowes: *Lament. 3. 39, 40.*
Wherefore doth a living man
complain? a man for the punish-
ment of his sins? Let us search
and try our wayes, and turne a-
gain unto the Lord.

And surely (to conclude this
first point) in this wee have all
cause to acknowledge our owne
folly, and to be humbled for
it; and to impute that want
of grace and ability that is in
us to mourne for our sinnes, unto
this, that wee have neglected
these times and seasons, where-
by wee might have beene so

Serm. 7.

Applic.

Serm. 7. much helped in this worke.

Wee know the fittest seasons for the plowing and breaking up of our ground, and wee carefully observe them; but we know not, or care not to observe the fittest seasons for the breaking up of the fallow ground of our hearts, which (yet) concerneth us much more than the other doth. *Breake up your fallow ground* (saith the Prophet, *Jer. 4. 3.*) *and sow not among thornes.*

2 *A fit place.*

The second thing we must do to worke our hearts to godly sorrow is this; after wee have made choice of a fit time to goe about this worke, wee must also make choyce of a fit place for it, even such as wherein we may bee most free from all distractions. For though this also bee but a circumstance, yet may it yeeld us some helpe in all exercises of devotion. Christ bids us make choice of a secret place for our private prayer, *Mat. 6. 6.*

And

And so did hee himselfe: *Mar.* Sermon 7.

1. 35. *Hee went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. And Act. 10. 9. Peter went up to the top of the house to pray.* So though it bee no shame for a man to weepe for his finnes, as wee have heard Gods people have done abundantly in their solemne fasts, yet is a solitary and secret place the fittest to worke our hearts unto godly sorrow: *Commune with your owne hearts upon your beds* (in secret saith David, *Ps. 4. 4.*) and bee still: *Hezechiab turned his face to the wall when he prayed, and wept sore, Esa. 38. 2, 3.* And *Jeremiah, c. 13. 17.* saith, *his soule should weepe in secret.* And *Zech. 12. 12.* it is said, *they should mourne every family apart, the husband apart, and the wife apart.* And *Jeremy* describing the man that is humbled under Gods hand aright, saith, *Lam. 3. 28. Hee sitteth alone and keepeth silence.*

L 3 Thirdly,

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Thirdly, when we have made choise of a fit time, and a fit place also for this businesse, then must we examine our hearts seriously, and impartially. And in this examination two things are to bee performed by us.

First, we must labour to finde out, and call to mind our sinnes, for which wee should bee humbled.

Secondly, we must lay them to our hearts, and so consider and weigh with our selves the hainousnesse of them, and aggravate them against our selves, that we may be affected with them.

For the first: Hee that desires to have his heart humbled, and to bee able to mourne for his sinnes, must labour by diligent search and examination to find out his sinnes, and call them to minde, and set them before his face. *Bring it againe to minde, O yee transgressours,* saith the Lord, *Esa. 46. 8.* Let not

man

Serm. 7.

man bee afraid or unwilling to doe this. To commit sinne is dangerous, and hurtfull to thy soule, but to call thy sinnes to remembrance hath no danger in it, will doe thee no hurt at all; to have an enemy or a mortall disease upon thee is dangerous and hurtfull, but to bee aware of them, to know them when thou hast them, may doe thee much good. *Job* knew this well, and therefore prayeth earnestly to God to helpe him in this: *Job* 13. 23. *Make mee to know my transgression, and my sinne.*

For first, till then thou canst never truly mourne for thy sin, and repent of it: *Jer. 8. 6. No man repented himselfe of his wickednesse, saying, what have I done?* To know in generall and in grosse that thou art a sinner, will never humble thee aright, thou must know thy sinnes in particular, or thou canst never truly repent. This was that that humbled Gods people so, in the

L 4 dayes

Serm. 7.

daies of *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 12.19. *We have added to all our other sinnes, this evill, to aske a King.* This was that that humbled those three thousand, mentioned, *Act.* 2.36,37. and pricked them at the heart; God made knowne to them their sinne in particular, even that hainous sin of crucifying the Lord of life.

Secondly, it is profitable for us in another respect. For the more carefull we are to remember our sinnes, and call them to minde, the more ready will the Lord be to forget them, and cast them behind his backe. This is plaine by that prayer *David* maketh, *Psal.* 51. 1, 2, 3. *Have mercy upon mee, O God, wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, for I know my transgressions, and my sinne is ever before mee.* But if thou strive to forget them, never to thinke of them, to cast them behind thy backe, be thou sure God will remember them, and never have them out of his eye:

eye: *Thou hast* (saith *Moses*, *Psal.* 90. 8.) *set our iniquities before thee, our secret sinnes in the light of thy countenance.*

But thou wilt say to me, What sinnes should I call to minde? all? that is an endlesse worke: I know not where to begin, nor where to make an end: *Psal.* 40. 12. *They are more in number* (saith *David*) *than the haire of my head.* How much more (wilt thou say) are my sinnes innumerable?

I answer, first, the more sinnes thou canst call to mind, the better it will be for thee. This wee may see *Ezek.* 20. 43. where this is promised as a singular grace, God would worke in his peoples hearts: *You shall remember your wayes, and all your doings, you have beene defiled and yee shall loath your selves in your owne sight, for all your evils that yee have committed.* Therefore also when the Lord prescribeth unto *Aaron* the

L 5 course

Serm. 7.

Quest.

Ans. I.

Serm. 7. course he should take in making an atonement between God and the people, hee tells him, *Lev. 16.21.* he must *confesse over the live goat, all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, in all their sinnes.* And therefore it is good when thou goest about this worke, to take the helpe of the glasse, set the glasse of Gods Law before thee, and examine thy wayes according unto it. *Rom. 3. 20. By the Law com-meth the knowledge of sinne.*

Answ. 2. Secondly, take heed thou dost not in thy examination willingly forget or passe by any sin; either (first) out of a conceit that it is but small: for Gods curse is due to the smallest, *Deut. 27. 26.* nor (secondly) out of favour thou bearest to it, and loathnesse to leave it: For if thou regard iniquity in thine heart, the Lord will not regard thee, *Pf. 66. 18.* and *Pro. 28. 13.* He that hideth his sin, shall not prosper. Thirdly

Thirdly and lastly, bee thou (yet) in this examination of thy selfe, specially desirous, and careful to call to mind, the foulest, and grossest of all thy finnes that ever thou committedst though it were long agoe: *Deut.*

9.7. Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness. Thus did *David* in the exercising of himselfe unto repentance, thinke oft of the sins of his youth: *Psal. 25.7. Remember not the finnes of my youth, nor my transgressions:* So did *Paul* oft call to mind his foulest finnes: *1 Tim. 1. 13. I was a blasphemer, and a persecuter.* For the heart will sooner bee brought to remorse and sorrow by remembrance of these than of smaller finnes; which was the cause why the Publicans and Harlots, those grosse sinners, repented sooner than the civill Pharisees, *Matt. 21. 22.*

No hard matter for you that have

Serm. 7.

Ans. 3.

Applic.

Serm. 7. have beene adulterers, blasphemers, persecuters, theeves, oppressours, drunkards, to bring your hearts unto godly sorrow, if you would take but a little paines with them. You that have lived more civilly (as that rich young man had done, that concerning the Commandements of the second Table, could say unto Christ, *Matth. 19. 20. All these things have I kept from my youth up*) must take the more paines in this worke.

The second thing we must do in this examination of our selves, is this : When wee have found out, and called to mind our finnes, then must wee consider and weigh with our selves the hainousnesse of them, aggravate them against our selves, and lay them so to heart, as wee may be affected and moved to remorse and sorrow for them. Men are oft blamed in this, that they laid not their finnes to their
their

their heart, considered not so of them as to bee affected with them. *Esa. 47. 7.* the Caldeans are blamed that they did not lay to their hearts the oppressions they had done to Gods people. And the Jewes, *Esay 57. 11.* that they laid not to heart their Idolatrie.

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Now the way to lay them to our hearts, is to consider well the hainousnesse of them, and the circumstances whereby they are aggravated. *Paul* did use thus to aggravate his finnes against himselfe: *Ephes. 3. 8.* *I am lesse than the least of Saints: 1 Tim. 1. 15.* *I am the chiefe of all sinners.*

The circumstances whereby sinne is aggravated are many; I will name a few of them.

Seven aggravations of sin.

First, consider thy finnes have beene committed against many, and strong meanes of grace. Remember what Christ saith, *Matth. 11. 24.* to Capernaum

Serm. 7. Capernaum because of this, *I say unto thee, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgement than for thee.* Oh consider with thy selfe, that if the finnes of Indians, and other barbarous people that never enjoyed any ordinary meanes of grace, shall justly bee punished in hell fire, as doubtlesse they shall; for as many as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law, saith the Apostle, Rom. 2. 12. if the finnes of Infants doe justly deserve damnation, as certainly they doe, *Death hath raigned* (saith hee, Rom. 5. 14.) *even over them that have not sinned after the similitude of Adams transgression,* that is, not actually: what degree and measure of punishment, and torment thinkest thou, is most justly due to thy finnes, that have beene committed against such meanes of grace as thou hast enjoyed?

Secondly,

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Secondly, thy finnes have not beene committed upon ignorance, but against thy knowledge. And if the elect Jewes were so pricked in heart for the sinne they committed ignorantly, *Act. 3. 17*, how much more cause hast thou? Remember what Christ saith of this circumstance, *Luk. 12. 47. That servant which knew his Lords will, and prepared not himselfe, neither did according to his will, shall bee beaten with many stripes.*

Thirdly, how voluntarily thou hast sinned, how weake and light the temptations have often beene that have drawne thee to it, nay how thou hast drawne and provoked thy selfe to it; and say thou to thine owne heart, If God were so much offended with *Ahab* though hee had so strong a tempter as *Jezebel* his wife, *1 King. 21. 25.* alas, what cause hath hee to be offended with mee, that have
beene

Serm. 7. beene mine owne tempter? Remember what the Holy Ghost speaketh of this circumstance: *Esay 33.1. Woe to thee that spoilest and wast not spoiled: and 5.18. Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, & sinne as it were with a cart-rope.*

Fourthly, the infinite number of thy sinnes. Say they were in their owne nature never so small, yet the number of them, and thy multiplying of them so oft, makes the burthen of them intolerable. Consider how the Lord aggravates sinne by this circumstance: *Jer. 5.6.*

A Lyon out of the forrest shall slay them, and a Wolfe of the evening shall spoile them, a Leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall bee torne in pieces, because their transgressions are many, and their back-slidings are increased: See what weight this very circumstance gave unto Davids sin in the sense of his conscience,

conscience: *Mine iniquities* (saith he, *Psal. 40. 12.*) *are more than the haire of mine head, therefore mine heart faileth me.* Serm. 7.

The islands though taken severally they be very small, yet many heaped together, will make an intolerable burden. *Job, cap. 6. 3.* saith, his griefe was heavier than the sand of the Sea. If for one sinne *Adam* was so terrified that hee fled from God, *Gen. 3. 8.* what cause of terrour have I, maist thou well say to thine owne soule?

Fifthly, how oft thou hast relapsed, and fallen backe againe into the same sinne that thy heart hath smitten thee for, and thou hast repented of, and covenanted with God that thou wouldest forsake it, returning with the dogge, to that thou hast loathed, and vomited up, *2 Pet. 2. 22.* An arme once broken cannot bee cured without paine, but if often, the cure will be more dangerous and painfull.
If

Serml. 7. If thou hadst broken thy promises and covenants with men, thou wouldst count it a matter of infamy and shame unto thee; what cause of shame is it then that thou hast broken my promises unto God? See also how this circumstance doth aggravate sinne: *Eccl. 5. 4. When thou vowest a vow unto God, deferre not to pay it, for he hath no pleasure in foolles.*

Sixthly, how thou hast by thy sinne corrupted others, whereof it may bee some are in hell already, and some in the way to hell, and thou canst not draw them unto repentance. Indeed if thou canst truly repent, this shall not hinder thy salvation, that thou hast beene a meane of the damning of others, for so was *Paul*, *Act. 26. 11.* yet must it needs bee a heart-breaking to thee, whensoever thou dost seriously thinke of it, all the daies of thy life: and so was it unto *Paul*. If thou hadst beene
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the meane to undoe another in his outward estate, much more if thou hadst taken away his life, it would be a just cause of heaviness to thee, how much more cause of humbling is it that thou hast been a meane of destroying the soule of any? *Matth. 18. 7. Woe to the man by whom the offence commeth. Jer. 6. 28. They are braske and iron, they are corruptors.*

Seventhly, consider the person against whom thou hast sinned: *Psal. 51. 4. Against thee, thee onely have I sinned.*

And consider the Lord, first, in his greatnesse and excellencie of power and justice. *If one man sinne against another, (saith Ely to his sonnes, 1 Sam. 2. 25.) the Judge shall judge him, but if a man sinne against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?*

Secondly, but specially in his goodnesse towards thy selfe. Consider that that God whom thou hast offended, thou dost
not

Serm. 7. not onely live by, *Act. 17. 28.* but also hee is of that gracious disposition, that notwithstanding all thy rebellions he would not have thee perish.

For first, hee is apt to forgive thee upon thy repentance, *Esa. 55. 7.*

Secondly, he hath proclaimed a generall pardon, and not excluded thee, *Job. 3. 16.* but will have it offered unto thee, *Mar. 16. 15.*

Thirdly, hee seeks to thee to be reconciled, *2 Cor. 5. 20.*

Fourthly, hee hath done more for thee, *he loves thee with the love of a father* (for to such specially I speake) *and thou hast received the spirit of adoption, whereby thou art able to cry, Abba, Father, Ro. 8. 15.* Consider well of this, & it will have more force to mortifie thy heart, than any thing else in the world.

The sense of our desperate estate without this, may make us roare, & rave, & rage against the Lord, *like a wild Bull in a net,*

as

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as the Prophet speaketh, *Esa.* 51. 20. but nothing will humble the heart so kindly, nor make it melt in godly sorrow, as the true consideration of this love of God: *Psal.* 130. 4. *There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest bee feared.* It was not the crowing of the Cocke twice, that made *Peters* heart melt, but the gracious look that Christ cast upon him: *Luk.* 22. 61, 62. *The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter: then Peter remembered the Word of the Lord, and Peter went out, and wept bitterly.* This was that that wrought upon the heart of the prodigall, *Luk.* 15. 18. *I will arise, and goe to my father, and I will say, Father, I have sinned.* And so must thou say to thine owne heart, if ever thou wouldst have it to melt, and thine eyes shed teares for thy sins. It is my father, my father that I have so offended. Say to it as *Moses* doth to the Jewes, *Dent.* 32. 6.

Have

Serm. 7. *Have I thus requited the Lord, O foolish and ungracious wretch that I am? is hee not my father? hath he not made me, and established me?*

The fourth and last thing wee must do to bring our hearts unto this godly sorrow, is fervent prayer.

For thou must first complaine to God of the hardnesse of thy heart: as *Esa. 63. 17. O Lord, why hast thou hardned my heart from thy feare?*

Secondly, begge this grace of him, and cry to him for it. That which the Apostle saith of wisdom, may bee said of this grace also: *Jam. 1. 5. If any of you lacke a soft heart, let him aske of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraiderh not, and it shall be given him.*

Thirdly, challenge him with his promise, and (in a holy reverence) charge him with that covenant mentioned, *Ezek. 36. 26. I will take away the stony heart*

heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh: and *Zech. 12. 10.* I will poure upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace, and of supplications, and they shall looke upon mee whom they have pierced, and they shall mourne for him as one that mourneth for his onely sonne, and be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first borne.

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Fourthly, be importunate in this suite, as one that will take no nay, nor give it over till thou hast obtained it, as *David, Psal. 27. 4.* and the woman of Canaan, *Matt. 15. 27.*

Fifthly, wait for an answer, and pray still; limit not the Lord his time: *Luk. 18. 1.* Wee ought alwayes to pray and not to faint. Consider how oft the Lord called upon thee before thou didst answer him, and how long hee waited for thee: *Rom. 10. 21.* All day long have I stretched

Serm. 7. *stretched forth my hands unto
a disobedient, and gainsaying
people. Remember that pro-
mise, Esa. 49. 23. They shall
not be ashamed (or dis-
appointed) that
wait for
me.*

SERMON



SERMON VIII.
AUGUST. II.
M.DC.XXVI.

T followeth now that wee proceed to shew you the signes and notes whereby wee may bee able to discerne whether we have beene yet rightly humbled for our finnes, whether that sorrow for sinne that wee have felt in our selves bee unfained yea or no, whether it bee that saving sorrow of Gods elect, unto which all these promises of comfort and mercie that wee have heard of doe belong. And sure it is a matter of great use and necessity to have notes given us out of Gods Word, to trie our humiliation and sorrow for sinne by.

M

First,

Serm. 8.

First, because as it is certaine our finnes are not pardoned unlesse wee have truly repented of them: (*Act. 5. 31. Christ giveth repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of finnes:*) So is it as certaine wee never truly repented of our finnes, if wee have not unfainedly sorrowed and mourned for them: *2 Cor. 7. 10. Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation. Wee must bee made (though not equall, yet) conformable to Christ in his death and passion, as the Apostle speaketh, Phil. 3. 10. or we shall never raigne with him. This is a faithfull saying, (saith the Apostle, 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12.) if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer with him, wee shall also raigne with him.* And this was a chiefe part of his passion, wherein we must be conformable unto him. When he suffered for our finnes, *Matt. 26. 37. He began to bee sorrowfull, and very heavie,* insomuch

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inſomuch that he could not containe, but muſt needs acquaint his three Diſciples with it, verſe 38. *Then ſaith hee unto them, my ſoule is exceeding ſorrowfull, even unto death.* When he ſuffered for our finnes, he wept abundantly, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Heb. 5. 7. He offered up prayers and ſupplications with ſtrong crying and teares.* Wee cannot ſorrow and weepe in that meaſure as he did for our finnes, but wee muſt ſorrow in our meaſure as he did; wee muſt bee made conformable to him in his paſſion as you have heard, or we ſhall never have part in him. We muſt either mourn as *Peter* did with a ſaving ſorrow, *Matt. 26. 75.* or we ſhall mourne as *Judas* did, with a deſperate ſorrow, *Matt. 27. 3, 5.* Wee muſt either now in this life mourne for our finnes (as we have heard all Gods ſervants have done) or wee ſhall certainly hereafter cry for ſorrow of heart, (as the Prophet

M 2

ſpeaketh,

Serm. 8. *speake*th, *Esa.* 65. 14.) and *houle* for vexation of spirit in hell, where shall be nothing but weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, as our Saviour speaketh, *Luk.* 13. 28. *where their worme never dyeth*, and the fire never shall be quenched, *Mar.* 9. 44.

Secondly, because men are very apt to bee deceived in this point, and to thinke they have beene rightly humbled, and have rightly sorrowed for their sinnes, when indeed they have not. We read of the hypocrites expostulation with God: *Esa.* 58. 3. *They had afflicted their soules and God tooke no knowledge of it: & Zech.* 7. 3, 5. *They had mourned and wept in their fasts*; and the Lord saith of them, they had not done it unto him, they had their own ends in it. Yea it is certain many hypocrites doe indeed mourne and are exceedingly humbled sometimes. You know the Lord giveth

giveth this testimony of *Ahab* Ser. 8.
himselſe, that he was humbled,
1 *Kings* 21.29. and yet as good
never a whit as never the bet-
ter ; their ſorrow and humili-
ation is to no purpoſe at all,
becauſe it is not ſound and ſin-
cere.

Thirdly, becauſe many of
Gods children that are indeed
true mourners, are apt to doubt
of themſelves, and to complaine
their hearts are ſo heard, that
they cannot mourne for their
ſinnes : O if they had ſoft and
melting hearts, that they could
ſorrow, that they could weepe
for ſinne, they were in an happy
caſe ; but (alas) they cannot.

Thus Gods Church and peo-
ple complaine unto God, *Eſa.*
63.17. *O Lord, why haſt thou*
hardned our hearts? Seeing ther-
fore it is as you ſee (in theſe three
reſpects) a matter of ſo great ne-
ceſſity to have a ſure direction
given us out of God Word how
to diſcerne that humiliation

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of soule and sorrow for sinne, that is sincere and saving, from that that is counterfeite; I will give you some principall notes of differences betweene them, whereby they may bee judged of. And these are to bee referred to foure heads.

*Signes of
true humili-
ation.*

The first is from the object of our sorrow and humiliation, the thing, the matter that wee are grieved and humbled for.

The second from the measure and degree of our sorrow.

The third from the cause that breedeth it in us, and fountaine from whence it floweth.

The fourth and last, from the effects and fruits that proceed from it.

For the first, if wee desire to know whether we were ever yet rightly humbled, or whether we doe still remaine in the hardnesse and impenitencie of our hearts, wee must examine what it is that hath troubled us, and made us to mourne.

First,

First, he that is truly humbled, Serm. 8.
mourneth for the evill of sinne,
rather than for the evill of pu-
nishment. It is no ill signe to
mourne and to bee humbled un-
der the judgements of God.
Nay it is our duty to be so, and
a passing ill signe it is of an un-
gracious heart, not to bee affe-
cted with the judgements of
God, not to bee troubled when
the Lord sheweth himselfe to
bee angry with us.

The Prophet complaineth of
this as of a great sinne: *Jer. 5. 3.*
O Lord, thou hast stricken them
and they have not grieved. It is
said of Gods people, *Ezra 10. 9.*
that they trembled because of
the great raine. And David, and
the Elders of Israel humbled
themselves greatly for the
plague that God sent upon the
land, *2 Sam. 24. 17.* And so did
Jehoshaphat, when God threat-
ned an invasion, *2 Chron. 20. 3.*
when the state and government
of the Kingdome of Israel, in

Serm. 8. the dayes of *Saul*, was so broken and out of order, had so many breaches in it, that it did even shake and totter as ready to fall and come to ruine, as the Prophet complaineth, *Psal. 60. 2.* Gods people were so troubled with the sensible token of Gods displeasure, that they were even astonished with it: *Thou hast made us to drinke the wine of astonishment*, as the Prophet speaketh, *vers. 3.* And certainly this is a dangerous signe, that our people generally are given up of God to a marvellous hardnesse of heart, that the Lord having by all these tokens of his anger called us to weeping & to mourning, as the Prophet speaketh, *Esa. 22. 12.* we have beene generally given to as much jollity in these times as ever wee were; *surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till you die, saith the Lord God of Hosts*, as it followeth, *vers. 14.* Yet though it be a good thing to bee humbled

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humbled under Gods judgements, this is not enough to prove our humiliation to be sound and sincere. Many an hypocrite hath gone so farre. Thus farre *Abab* went: O how he was humbled at the hearing of that fearefull judgement that God threatned by the Prophet to bring upon him and his house? *1 King. 21. 29.* Seeft thou how *Abab* humbleth himselfe? Thus farre *Jehoram* his sonne, and as bad a man almost as hee, went: when a grievous famine was upon the land, he greatly humbled himselfe; for though he were a King, hee wore sackcloth, not as his upper garment as the maner was, to expresse their humiliation outwardly, but secretly next his skin, *2 King. 6. 30.* See how farre an hypocrite may goe in humbling himselfe under Gods judgements. But the true repentant, though hee is humbled for, and can mourn for Gods judgements, yet that is neither the

Serm. 8. onely nor the chiefe cause of his sorrow; his finnes that have provoked God to those judgements, trouble him most. *I will declare mine iniquity* (saith David, Psalm. 38. 18.) *and be sorry for my sinne.* And Ezek. 7. 16. *They shall be on the mountaines like the doves of the valleyes, all of them mourning, every man for his iniquity.* Yea even when Gods judgements do presse and humble him most, yet hee is more troubled for his sinne, than for the affliction that is upon him; as wee shall see in that prayer of David, Psal. 25. 18. *Looke upon my affliction and my paine, and forgive all my sinnes.* And so it is said of Gods people in Ezra's time, when the Lord by a judgement of immoderate raine had testified his displeasure against them: Ezra 10. 9. *They trembled because of this matter* (their sinne in marrying Idolaters) *and for the great raine.* Their sinne was the chiefe

chiefe thing they trembled for.

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Let us then examine our sorrow by this first note: alas, many blesse themselves in this, that they have beene much given to sorrow and heavinesse.

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First, if sorrow be good (saith many a one) I have had enough of that. Yea upon this they ground their hope, that they shall escape the wrath to come, because they have endured so much sorrow in this life. I have had my punishment in this life, saith he. Alas poore wretch, of all thy sorrowes that thou hast endured, I may say as our Saviour doth in another case, *Matt. 24.8. All these are but the beginning of sorrows*; worldly sorrowes are but the beginning of hellish sorrowes. *The devils also beleeve and tremble*, after this sort, as the Apostle speaketh, *Jam. 2.19.* They are troubled exceedingly (more than ever thou couldst bee) with the apprehension and sense of the punishment,

Serm. 8. punishment, which they undoubtedly beleewe, is prepared for them.

Secondly, many of you are oft troubled with sadnesse and heavinesse of heart, and can say as *Job, c. 23. 16. God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth mee.* O that thou couldst turne the streame of thy sorrow the right way, from sorrowing for thy affliction to sorrowing for thy sinne. One houre spent in sorrowing for thy sinne, will yeeld thee more true comfort, than a thousand spent in sorrowing for thy affliction will doe.

Thirdly, and wee all now assembled to professe our humiliation for the manifold tokens of Gods anger upon his Church and this land, must examine the truth of our hearts in this, whether we can as well mourne for the sinnes of the land, as for the judgements of God that are upon it, and are threatned against it.

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it. See a notable example of this in *Nehemiah*, chap. 1. when he heard of the great affliction and reproach Gods people were in at Jerusalem, vers. 3. *How the walls of Jerusalem were broken downe, and the gates thereof burnt with fire: he sate downe and wept, and mourned certaine dayes, and fasted and prayed before the God of Heaven,* as hee saith vers. 4. But what is 'it that most humbled and troubled his heart in this his fast? Surely not so much the judgement whereby God had shewed himselfe to bee angry with them, as their sins whereby they had made him angry, as you shall see, vers. 6, 7. And surely the finnes of the land ought to trouble us more than any of the judgements either present or imminent (though they be very great and fearefull.)

For first, they give us cause to feare farre heavier than these bee, and that God hath said of
England

Serm. 8. England, as hee said once of the Kingdome of Juda, *Eze. 21. 27. I will overturne, overturne, overturne it, and it shall bee no more.*

Secondly, if it were not for the finnes of the land, these judgements would vanish, or do us no hurt at all: *1 Cor. 15. 56. The sting of death is sinne.* And of one sinne, the sinne of Idolatrie (specially being openly committed, and alas, our land standeth guilty of that and of many more) it is said, *Exod. 32. 25. Moses saw (though every blind foole could not see it) that the people were naked; for Aaron had made them naked to their shame before their enemies.* Alas, the finnes of the land make us naked to our enemies abroad, and to our treacherous and bloody Papists at home; doe what we can to defend and arme our selves, till our sins be repented of, till they bee removed, we shall be found

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to be a naked people. We cannot stand before our enemies, till the accursed thing (till *Achan*) be taken away, *Josh. 7. 13.* and alas, we have many *Achans* amongst us. So many of you therefore as have hearts that can mourne, that can bee humbled, mourne for the finnes of the land, and by the first note approve unto God and to your owne hearts the truth of your humiliation, that you professe this day. And so much for the first note.

Secondly, hee that is truly humbled mourneth for sinne, not so much in respect to himselfe, of the hurt and danger that his sinne bringeth upon himselfe, as in respect to God, because hee is offended and dishonoured by his sinne. Saving sorrow is therefore called, *2 Cor. 7. 10.* *Godly sorrow*, *χρὴ Θεοῦ λυπη*, sorrow that respecteth God, and is opposed to *worldly sorrow*, that respecteth onely

Serm. 8. onely the crosses and miseries that sinne maketh us subject unto.

I grant, first, it is not unlawfull to be troubled for sinne, even out of respect to the punishment, and miserie that it will bring upon us. As a man may have respect to this in his feare that keepeth him from committing sinne; so may hee also in his sorrow for it, after it is committed. *Job* giveth this for a reason why he durst not sinne: *For destruction from God (saith hee, Job. 31. 23.) was a terrour to me.* And so doth *Paul*, *2 Cor. 5. 11. Knowing therefore the terrours of the Lord, we perswade men.*

Secondly, sound and saving humiliation for sinne useth to begin in this legall compunction and terrour, which hath respect onely to the misery that sinne bringeth us to. And not one of a hundred do ever come to mourn for sinne in respect to God, till they have first learned to mourn
for

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for sinne in respect to themselves: this prepareth, maketh way for, and draweth in the other, as the prickè of the needle doth the threed. So it is said of those three thousand that were converted by *Peter*, *Act. 2.37.* *that they were (first) pricked in their hearts,* that is, with this legall sorrow and feare. But though this bee a lawfull and good thing to mourne and bee troubled for sin, even in respect of the misery it maketh us obnoxious unto, yet is not this sufficient to prove our humiliation and sorrow for sinne to be sound and sincere, for many an hypocrite hath gone so far, they have been greatly humbled and troubled for their sins. O how *Pharaoh* complained and cryed out of his sin! *Exod. 9.27.* *He saith to Moses & Aaron, I have sinned, the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.* And so did *Judas*, *Mat. 27.3,4.* *Hee repented himselfe, and cryed out,*

Serm. 8. *out, saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood.* Did not these men mourn for their sinnes thinke you? Yes that they did, but it was not out of any respect to God whom they had offended, but onely out of respect to themselves, and the hurt they had done themselves thereby, as appeareth plainly in their stories.

Now the true repentant, though hee be humbled for his sinne in respect to himselfe, and the danger and hurt that hee feareth his sinne will doe him, yet he resteth not there, but hee is also humbled for his sinne in respect to God; and chiefly because he hath offended and dishonoured God by his sinne. This was that that troubled David most: *Psal. 51. 4. Against thee, thee onely have I sinned.* When God had threatened heavie things against him, hee cryeth (not as Pharaoh, *Exod, 10. 17. Take away from mee*

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mee this death onely, but as)
2 Sam. 24.10. I beseech thee, O
Lord take away the iniquitie
of thy servant. Yea he was well
content to beare that punish-
ment, so his sinne might be par-
doned that he might have Gods
favour: vers. 17. Let thy hand
I pray thee bee against mee,
and my fathers house. The
punishment that his sinne hath
brought or is like to bring upon
him, troubleth the true penitent
nothing so much as the offen-
ding of God, and losse of his fa-
vour; He lamenteth after the
Lord, as it is said Gods people
did, 1 Sam. 7. 2. And as hee
mourneth for his sin in respect
to God more than to the pu-
nishment of his sinne, so doth
he joy and take more comfort
in the assurance of the pardon
of his sinne, than in deliverance
from any judgement whatsoe-
ver. This is the thing that Da-
vid gloried in: Psal. 32.5. Thou
forgavest (not the punishment,

as

Serm. 8. as the old translation reads, but)
the iniquity of my sinne.

Applic.

O let us examine our selves by this second note, whether we have sorrowed for our sinnes in respect unto God, or to our selves onely. Thy sinnes doe trouble thee because thou knowest they deserve hell and damnation, thou knowest they deserve Gods curse in thy children, in thy estate, in every thing thou takest in hand. Thou dost well in this: but if this bee the onely thing, or the chiefe thing that maketh thy sinne such a burden to thy heart, thou hast not yet repented aright. When those that heard *Peter* were pricked in their hearts with these legall sorrowes, and asked him what they should doe to come to comfort, hee bad them Repent, *Act. 2. 37, 38.* As if hee had said, This is a good preparative, but this is not repentance.

This is a chiefe note of sincerity in every grace, and so in this,

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this, when we doe that that God requireth, when we mourne for our finnes in respect unto God, and not to our selves. Thus God upbraideth the hypocrites, *Zec.*

7. 5. When yee fasted and mourned, did yee it at all to mee, even to mee? Rom. 14. 6. Hee that regardeth a day regardeth it unto the Lord. I will give you therefore three other notes to trie this by, whether your sorrow for sinne bee in respect to the Lord because you have offended and dishonoured him, or no.

First, then your finnes will trouble you aswell in the dayes of health and prosperity, as in sicknesse, and affliction, else you do no more than an hypocrite may do. For it is said of the wicked Israelites, *Psal. 78. 34. When he slew them, then they sought him, and returned, and enquired early after God.*

Secondly, then you will bee troubled for one sinne aswell

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as for another, for every thing you know to be a sinne, for God is offended and dishonoured by one aswell as by another. *Who-soever shall keepe the whole Law* (saith the Apostle, *Jam. 2. 10.*) *and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* I do not say wee should be troubled so much for one sinne as for another, for God in his Law hath put a difference betweene sins; and as some duties that God requireth of us, so some sinnes are weightier than others: *Matth. 23. 23. Judgement, Mercy, and Fidelity* are called by our Saviour the *weightier matters of the Law*; and it is made there the note of an hypocrite to bee more troubled for small sinnes than for great: *Matt. 23. 24. to straine at a gnat, and swallow a camell.*

But this is also certaine, that he that is troubled for sinne, because it is sinne in respect unto God, because he is offended and dishonoured

dishonoured by it, will be troubled for one sinne aswell as for another. So wee shall find *David* was humbled, not for his adultery and murder onely, but for all his sins : *Psal. 51. 9. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.*

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The Apostle speaking of the loose performing of spirituall duties, of comming to the Sacrament without due preparation, faith, wee must judge our selves even for that, *1 Cor. 11. 31.* and faith, that even for this sinne God stricke many with sicknesse and mortality; because they would not judge themselves for such finnes, God did judge them, *1 Cor. 11. 30.* *David's* heart smote him even for cutting off the lap of *Saul's* garment, *1 Sam. 24. 5.* When *Saul* counted the sparing of *Agag*, and of the fattest of the cattell (specially for sacrifice) but a matter of nothing, *Samuel* telleth him, *Disobedience to God is as bad*

Serm. 8. *bad as witchcraft and idolatrie,*
1 Sam. 15. 23. Oh therefore
 know thou art not troubled for
 any sinne in respect of God, if
 thy very unprofitablenesse, idle-
 nesse, peevishnesse, unconstan-
 cie, playing fast and loose with
 God, do not trouble thee.

Yea the man whose heart is
 truly humbled for sinne, is con-
 scious of the sinfull depravation
 of his nature, and is humbled for
 that (which is the roote) asmuch
 (if not much more) than for his
 actuall finnes, which are the
 fruits of it. *All finnes that de-*
file a man come from within
from this fountaine, Mar. 7. 23.
David was humbled for this:
Psal. 51. 5. Behold, I was shapen
in iniquity, and in sinne did my
mother conceive mee. And so
Paul, though hee had lived a
 most innocent life even before
 his calling to Christ, *Phil. 3. 6.*
 yet see how hee was trou-
 bled even for this, *Rom. 7. 14, 24.*
 Thirdly, if you bee humbled
 for

for your sinne out of respect to God, because God is offended and dishonoured by it, then will you be able to mourne for the sins of other men; for God is as well offended and dishonoured by them as by your owne. First, I shewed you before that the man that is truly humbled for the judgements of God upon this Land, will mourne more for the sins of the Land, than for the judgements themselves: so must we (secondly) be able to mourne for the sinnes of the places and townes wee dwell in, specially if they bee of note for religion. This is prescribed as a duty, 1 Cor. 5. 2. *Ye should have mourned, that he that hath done this deed, might be taken away.* This is commended by the Holy Ghost as a great vertue & grace in Lot, 2 Pet. 2. 8. *that in seeing & hearing, he vexed his righteous soule from day to day with the unlawfull deeds of the Sodomites.* This hath a great promise

N

of

Serm. 8. of speciall protection in the daies of common calamity. *Goe through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem* (saith the Lord to the man clothed in linnen with the writers inkhorne by his side, *Ezek. 9. 4.*) *and set a marke upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations that bee done in the midst thereof.* Thirdly, for the sinnes especially of our owne families, for they should trouble us most: *Nehemiah* in his fast complained chiefly of his owne, and of the sinnes of his fathers house, *Neh. 1. 6.* And it is said that when God should poure the spirit of grace and of supplications upon his people, they should mourne every family apart, *Zec. 12. 12.* And *Job* even out of the feare that his sons in their feasting might have sinned, offered burnt offerings (which were alwayes accompanied with profession of humiliation) for them, *Job 1. 5.* Certainly

Certainly, he that careth not
how much lewdnesse there bee
in the towne where hee liveth,
nor in his owne family, and that
is not unfainedly troubled for
it, nor endeavoureth to re-
forme it, was never yet
rightly humbled for
any sin of his
owne.

Serm. 8.

Applic.

FINIS.

N 2

Consider the last column of
how many times the number
in the row is contained in
the number in the column
it is not contained in the
row is not contained in the
column is not contained in
the row is not contained in
the column is not contained in



A
SERMON
PREACHED
IN

Ashby-Chappell, Oct. 4. 1629.

BY
ARTH. HILDERSAM.



LONDON,
Printed by R.T. for Edw. Brewster.

A
SERMON
PREACHED
IN

St. Andrew's Church, New York

AT
THE NEW-YORK



AND
PUBLISHED BY



**A SERMON
PREACHED**
in Ashby-Chappell,
O^rob.4.1629.

ECCLES. II. 8.

*But if a man live many yeares,
and rejoyce in them all; yet
let him remember the dayes
of darkenesse, for they shall be
many. All that commeth is
vanitie.*

THe occasion of these
words, and the de-
pendance they have
upon that that went
before, is this: *Solo-*
mon in the fixe first verses of this
Chapter, had earnestly exhorted
to the workes of mercy and cha-
N 4 rity,

rity, and enforced his exhortation by many strong & perswasorie arguments. In this verse and that which goeth before it, hee concludes that exhortation with another forcible argument, taken from the consideration of our future estate. And the summe of his argument is, as if hee should have said thus: *Doe all that thou art able to doe, that thou maist provide well for thy future estate.* It is the very same argument in effect which our blessed Saviour useth to the same purpose, *Luk. 12.33. Sell that yee have and give almes: provide your selves bagges that waxe not old, a treasure in the Heavens that faileth not, where no theefe approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.* As if he should say, Bestow your goods so while you live here, as you may have most use and comfort of them in the life that is to come: as our Merchants that trade into Turkie or Persia.

Persia will lay out their money there upon those commodities that will bee most beneficiall to them here, when they shall come home againe.

This argument *Solomon* propounds here by way of answer to an objection that men (specially voluptuous men) are apt to make against all this that he had said to perswade them to workes of charity and mercy, & whereby they are made most backward unto this duty. The objection is set downe in the 7. vers. *Truly the light is sweete, and a pleasant thing, it is for the eyes to behold the sunne.* Where it is to be observed (for the opening of the words) that by light is meant, a pleasant, and prosperous, and comfortable life. For as our life is called in holy Scripture, *the light of the living*, *Psal. 56. 13.* because life it selfe is sweete and comfortable to man; so is a comfortable estate in this life oft set forth

and resembled by this metaphor. When *Eliphas* would perswade *Job* how beneficiall a thing it would bee unto him to returne unto the Almighty, not onely in respect of spirituall and eternall, but even of worldly and temporall blessings also that he should be sure to receive by it, he expresseth it thus, *Job* 22. 28. *Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall bee established unto thee; and the light shall shine upon thy wayes*; that is, thou shalt prosper in whatsoever thou takest in hand, and have comfort in it. *The Jewes* (saith the sacred Story, *Est.* 8. 18. upon the advancement of *Mordecai*, and the reversing of *Hamans* letters) *had light, and gladnesse, and joy, and honour*. So that the objection which the voluptuous man maketh, vers. 7. *is in effect thus much, Certainly life is sweet, and it is a great happinesse to live plentifully, & prosperously, neatly, and pleasantly in this world,*
which

which I can never do, if I should not bee carefull to keepe that I have, if I should hearken to thy counsell, and be so liberall and bountifull to the poore, as thou wouldst have mee to be.

This objection Solomon gives answer to in this verse. And in his answer three points are to be observed:

First, a supposition of two things: first, suppose (saith hee) *that a man do live many yeares,* which (yet) no man (specially no voluptuous man) hath cause to looke for: *For what is your life?* (saith the Apostle, *Jam. 4. 14.*) *It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*

Secondly, suppose also that *he rejoyce in them all;* which (yet) is more unlikely and (in a manner) impossible; for all men (good & bad) are subject in their whole life, to many occasions of sorrow, which they can by no meanes avoid. *Man is borne unto*

unto trouble (saith Eliphaz, Job 5.7. *as the sparkes fly upward.* Yea every day of mans life will bring forth some new occasion of sorrow unto him, or other: *sufficient unto the day is the evill thereof*, saith our Saviour, *Mat. 6. 34.* Yea it is thus even with the best men: *All the day long have I beene plagued* (saith the Prophet, *Psal. 73. 14.*) *and chastened every morning.*

Then followes the second point to bee observed in the words, and that is *a charge or admonition*; as if he should say, Admit both those things that I have thus supposed; yet for all that, I advise and charge him, *Let him remember the dayes of darknesse.* Wherein also observe (for the opening of the words) first, that *by the daies of darknes* he meanes all that time that we shall spend in the estate of the dead. For though the godly (in respect of their soules) bee presently after death translated in-
to

to Paradise, according to that speech of our Saviour, *Luk. 23.43. This day shalt thou bee with me in Paradise*; and there is no darknesse there, nothing but light and comfort unspeakable, (*The inheritance of the Saints is in light*, saith the Apostle, *Col. 1.12. In thy presence is fulnesse of joy* (saith David, *Psal. 16.11.*) *at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore*;) yet (in respect of the bodies of all men) as this life is fitly compared to *light*, so is the state of the dead unto *darknesse*. And so speaketh *Job* of it, *c. 10. 21. Before I goe whence I shall not return, even to the land of darknesse, and to the shadow of death*, that is, before I die: Yea even the souls also of all wicked men shall after death abide in *darknesse* everlasting. And so their misery is expressed, *Cast him into outer darknes, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Secondly, observe the reason why

Mar. 22.
13.

why he would have these *dayes of darknesse* to bee remembered and thought upon, *because they are many*, saith he, a great many more than the time we can hope to spend here. In which respect death is called, *Jer. 51. 57. a perpetuall sleepe*, and wee use to call our grave our long home. And even for this cause it behooves us to bee more carefull to provide well for our future estate, than for this present life. As all wise men will care more for, and bestow more cost upon that house and land, which they hold in free-hold or by inheritance, than upon that where they are but tenants at will, or hold for terme of life onely.

Thirdly and lastly, observe the conclusion which hee inferres upon this admonition & charge, *All that commeth*, (that man getteth and enjoyeth here,) *is vanity* and emptines, no sound comfort or contentment of heart is to be found in it.

The

The principall point then that is to be observed (you see) in these words, is the *admonition and charge* that *Solomon* gives here, to *remember the dayes of darknesse*; and from thence this Doctrine ariseth for our instruction: *That it is profitable and necessary for all men, even in their best health, in their greatest prosperity, to remember and thinke oft of their death, and of their future estate.*

Two sorts of witnesses I will produce for the confirmation of this.

The first is of good men, who have thus judged of the meditation of death.

This appeareth first by their practise; they have beene wont to thinke much of their change. This was *Jobs* daily meditation, *All the dayes of my warfare,* (saith he, *Job* 14. 14. for so I read it with sundry of the best * Interpreters,) *will I wait till my change come.* Neither did hee
onely

* *Vetus*
Lat. Calv.
Pagnin.
Vatablus,
Arias
Montanus.

onely in the times of his misery and affliction thinke thus of his change and wait for it, but in the dayes of his greatest prosperity also, as appears by that which he saith, *Job 3.25. The thing that I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me.* When he was in the height and strength of his peace and health, he lived in continuall feare and expectation of a change.

Secondly, it appeares that they judged it profitable and necessary to think much of their end, by the helpes they were wont to use to keepe their death alwayes in their remembrance.

For first, they counted it their wisdome to visit the sicke, and go oft to the house of mourning, even for this purpose. *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,* saith Solomon, *Ecel. 7. 4.* and why did they account it their wisdome to doe so? hee had given us the reason of that

that in the second verse, *For this is the end of all men* (saith hee) *and the living will lay it to his heart.*

Secondly, to this end also they were wont to make their sepulchers in their life time: so did *Afa* one of the good Kings of *Juda*, *2 Chron.* 16. 14. and so did good *Josia* also, *2 King.* 23. 30. and so did *Joseph* of *Arimathea*, *Mat.* 27. 60.

Thirdly and lastly, they were wont in their prayers earnestly to begge helpe of God this way. *Teach us to number our dayes*; say Gods people to God in their prayer, *Psal.* 90. 12. that is, teach us to consider the shorreness and uncertainty of our life, as *David* interpreted that prayer. of *Moses*, in another prayer of his to the same effect, *Psal.* 39. 4. *Lord make mee to know mine end, and the number of my dayes, what it is, that I may know how fraile I am.* Because they knew well on the one side, how
usefull

usefull and necessary it was for them, oft to thinke of the uncertainty and shortnesse of their life, and on the other side, how hard a thing it was for them to keepe this in their minde, how apt they were to grow forgetfull of it; therefore they did earnestly sue unto God, that by his holy Spirit, hee would please to helpe them in this case. And this is my first sort of witnesses.

The second is the Lord himselfe, for hee hath also declared himselfe to judge so of the benefit and necessity of this meditation. First, by that earnest charge which our Saviour giveth to his Disciples concerning this, *Mar. 13. 35. Watch yee therefore, for yee know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: & vers. 37. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, watch: that is, live in a continuall expectation of your end, and of the*
account

account you must bee called un-
 roy because you know not how
 soone and sudden it may be.

Secondly, by that patheticall
 with the Lord uttereth, *Deut.*
32. 29. O that they were wise,
that they understood this, that
they would consider their latter
end! Hee wisheth his people
 would understand and consider
 also, thinke and meditate seri-
 ously of their latter end; and he
 accounts it a high point of
 wisdom for them to do so.

I know well that the medica-
 tion and thought of death is bit-
 ter to the flesh, and useth to
 breed much heavinesse & feare
 in the heart. And this is a chiefe
 thing that makes men unwill-
 ing to entertaine it.

But, as many other bitter
 things are most wholsome and
 soveraigne, even so is this. Thus
 doth *Solomon* answer this ve-
 ry objection, which hee knew
 men would bee apt to make a-
 gainst that which hee had said,
 shewing

Object.

Ans.

shewing the benefit of going to those houses; where people are mourning for the sicknesse or death of their friends. Alas, (will men say) if wee should use to do so, we should never be merry, but sad, and penfive, and melancholicke. O saith he, *Eccles. 7. 3. but sorrow is better than laughter; for by the sadnesse of the countenance, the heart is made better.*

Three great benefits wee may receive by thinking oft and seriously of our latter end. Which may serve for the Reasons and Grounds of the Doctrine.

Reason.
I.

First, this would season all our pleasures and earthly contents, so as wee should be kept from surfeiting of them. He that is perswaded of the necessity of watching continually for the Lords coming, and resolved to do so, will keepe himselfe sober from being overcome with the immoderate love of any earthly thing:

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as he that knowes he must keepe the watch in a besieged City, will bee sure to keepe himselfe from taking too much drink. *Because the time is short* (saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30.) *therefore let him that rejoiceth be as though he rejoyced not.* As if he should say, take heed of rejoycing too much in any earthly thing, because our time here is but short. Therefore our Saviour at a great feast, *Mar. 14. 5, 8.* falls into a meditation and speech of his death and buriall.

And this was also (it seemes) the reason why sundry good men were wont to make their sepulchers in their gardens, the places of their greatest solace and delight. So wee read that *Manasses* did after his humiliati- on and repentance, 2 *King. 21. 18.* And so did *Joseph of Arimathea* also, as we may see, *Joh. 19. 41.*

Secondly, nothing would have more force than this to restraints
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us from sinne; and to breed in us a care to please God in all things. This reason is given in that prayer, *Psal. 90. 12. So teach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* If we could number our dayes well, and consider how few they are like to bee, this would make us apply our hearts to wisdom and piety more seriously than we doe. Experience shewes this, even in the worst men. O what Saints seeme many of them to bee in their extreme sickness? How fearfull are they then to offend God in any thing? Nay, no man (almost) is so desperately wicked, that durst doe any thing his conscience knew to bee sinne, if hee thought he must die instantly, so soone as he had done it. Durst any man give himselfe liberty to be drunke, if he considered hee might die while he is drunke, as *Elah* did? *2 King. 16. 9, 10.* Or durst any man commit whoredome

dome, if he could seriously think of this, that God might strike him suddenly, even while hee is in that filthy act, as he did *Zimri* and *Cazbi*? *Numb. 25. 8.* Therefore also wee shall finde this oft noted for a chiefe cause of many grosse sinnes that men live in, even the wilfull forgetting of their change, and putting it out of their mind. *David* speaking of the profane man, *Psal. 10. 4.* who *through the pride of his countenance will not seeke after God*; *God is not in all his thoughts*; giveth this for a reason of all this profanenesse, *vers. 6.* *Hee hath said in his heart, I shall not bee moved, I shall never be in adversity.* And the Prophet speaking of unjust and cruell men that did oppresse the poore, gives this for the reason of it, *Amos 6. 3.* because they did by all meanes put out of their mindes the thought of their death, and the judgement that they must come unto: *Yee put farre*

farre away (saith he) the evill day, and cause the seat of violence to come neere.

Thirdly and lastly, nothing would be of more force to worke in us a care to prepare our selves for death, that it may not take us at unawares before wee bee ready for it, than this, if wee would oft and seriously thinke of it. And this would be (doubtlesse) a great benefit and advantage unto us; this is a point of true wisdom, and ought to be the chiefe care of every Christian, to provide that he may die well. *Heare counsell, and receive instruction (saith Solomon, Prov. 19. 20.) that thou maist be wise at thy latter end.* This is one maine end we should aime at in all our hearing and seeking knowledge, that we may learne to die well. This was the Apostles chiefe care, *that hee might finish his course with joy, Act. 20. 24.*

And on the other side, it is
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the most dangerous and wofull negligence that a man can fall into, not to prepare before hand, and provide that hee may dye well. Oh it is a most miserable thing for death to take us at unawares before we be ready. *Take heed to your selves* (saith our Saviour, *Luke 21. 34.*) *that that come not upon you unawares.*

Sudden death certainly is a kind of temporall judgement, even unto the best men (and so farre forth may bee prayed against) because the best man is not so well prepared for death in the time of his health and prosperity, but he hath just cause to desire and endeavour also to prepare himself better for it before he dye. True it is, we should be at all times (as Gods people were when they did eate the passeover, *Exo. 12. 11.* *with their loins girded, their shooes on their feet, and their staves in their hand*) ready to pass from this *Egypt* unto our heavenly *Canaan*.

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But (though every man should be, yet) no man is so well prepared at all times as hee ought to be. But sudden death is to a wicked man, that is not at all prepared for it, more than a temporall judgement. Though a man have made his will before-hand, and have it in a readinesse lying by him, yet may hee esteeme it a good temporall blessing, when his last sicknesse, whereby God visits him, is not so violent, but he may be able to review it, and adde or alter some small things in it before his death. And on the other side it may justly bee accounted a temporall judgement upon him, when God takes him away with a dead Palsie or Apoplexy, that would disable him from doing so much. And yet if hee doe dye of such a disease, the matter is not great, because hee had made his will before, and disposed of his maine estate according to his minde. But it is (we know) a matter of
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great danger and inconvenience for a rich man that hath not made his will before, to betaken with such a sicknesse at his end. And even so is it in this case. Sudden death is no such judgement to Gods childe, who is for the maine prepared for it, as it is to the wicked man, who is not at all prepared for it. It is certainly a dangerous and fearfull thing for a man to live out of Gods favour, and void of grace, at any time; but to dye in that estate is the very up-shot of all misery. And so the Holy Ghost speaketh of it. *Eliphaz* speaking of the extreme unhappinesse of wicked men, hee concludes it thus, *Job 4. 21. They even dye without wisdom* (saith hee) as if he should say, *and what can be said more to prove them most wretched men?* So speaketh the Prophet, when hee would describe the misery of the man that hath gotten a great deale of wealth by oppression and fraud,

Jer. 17. 11. at his end he shall be a foole, saith he; he shall be utterly void of true wisdom and grace, even when he dyes. And this must needs be so, because there is no possibility of repenting and turning unto God, of recovering his favour, or obtaining any grace from him after death. Hee that dyes without grace, must to judgement presently so soon as he is dead, Heb. 9. 27. And hell followes with death, saith the holy Ghost, Rev. 6. 8. q. d. they goe hand in hand; as judgement is immediatly passed upon them that dye out of Gods favour, so hell is ready presently to receive them.

Now this Doctrinewhich you have heard thus opened and confirmed unto you, is of great use,

Use I.

First, to reprove and condemne us all of great folly and madnesse. 1. None of us are so carefull to nourish this thought and meditation in our hearts, so desirous

desirous or willing to thinke of our death and future estate as we ought to be. Nay, 2. Most of us do wilfully refuse to thinke of death, and abandon this thought by all meanes, and use our utmost endeavour to keep it out of our hearts; as the Persian Kings were wont to keep all mourners out of their gates, *Esth. 4. 2.* Nay, 3. (which is worst of all) many of us for this very cause will not thinke of our end, but banish by all meanes this meditation out of our hearts, that wee may sinne the more freely. And with those vile men (that I told you the Prophet complains of, *Amos 6. 3.*) wee put farre away the evill day, of purpose, that wee may cause the seat of violence to come neere, that without feare and checke of conscience wee may run headlong into all excesse of riot that wee can devise.

Secondly, this Doctrin serves to exhort us all to prepare

Use 2.

for death. For that is the chiefe reason (as we have heard) why we should remember and thinke of it so oft. And this preparation consisteth in two things principally:

First, we must labour to wean our hearts daily from the overmuch love of all earthly things, and inure our selves to beare willingly the daily and ordinary crosses wee are subject to in this life: nothing makes us so unwilling and unfit to dye, as the immoderate love of earthly things. They are in themselves (certainly) Gods good blessings, and hee doth (of his goodnesse and bounty) allow us to use and enjoy them, not for our necessity onely, but even for our delight and comfort also *hee giveth us richly all things to enjoy*, saith the Apostle, *1 Tim. 6. 17.* But the love of them is a most deadly enemy to grace, specially unto this grace of dying willingly and comfortably. That which
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the Apostle saith of the *love of money*, 1 Tim. 6. 10. that it is *the root of all evil*, and cause why many are even *pierced thorow with many sorrowes*, (the truth whereof is never more seen, than when they are to dye) may bee likewise said of the love of any other worldly thing. *Love not the world* (saith the Apostle, 1 John 2. 15.) *neither the things that are in the world*. If any man *love the world*, the *love of the Father is not in him*. For this cause it was that our blessed Saviour, when he would prepare his Disciples for persecution and death, beates so much upon these points.

First, that they would take heed of esteeming too highly of, or over-loving any of the comforts of this life.

Secondly, that they would learne to beare willingly the ordinary crosses God is pleased to exercise them with. *He that loveth father or mother* (saith he,

Matth. 10. 37, 38.) more than mee, is not worthy of mee ; and he that loveth sonne or daughter more than mee, is not worthy of mee. And he that taketh not his crosse, and followeth after mee, is not worthy of mee. And hee said to them all (Luke 9. 23.) If any man will come after mee, let him deny himselfe, and take up his crosse daily, and follow mee. And so the Apostle saith of himselfe, 1 Cor. 15. 31. that hee did dye daily ; that is, by his willing forsaking of the comforts of this life, & bearing of those daily crosses that he was subject unto, he learned to dye every day.

Secondly, our preparation for death consisteth in our care to dispatch without delay and with all diligence those things of most importance, which must needs bee done before wee dye: because wee doe not know how soone, nor how suddenly death may take us.

Thus we see the harvest man
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and traveller, that are affraid to be benighted, are wont to doe. And wee have Christs owne example for this, *I must worke the workes of him that sent mee* (saith he, *John 9.4.*) *while it is day; the night commeth when no man can worke.*

And what is that businesse of importance (will you say) that wee must thus dispatch without delay, if we would be well prepared to dye? Surely, to make this sure to our selves, that whensoever wee die, our soules shall goe to heaven: When this businesse is once done, we shall be able to dye confidently and comfortably; when once *we know* (as the Apostle speaketh of himself, & of others of the faithfull also, *2 Cor. 5.1.*) *that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternall in the heavens; then we may say as hee also doth there, Ver. 6. Therefore we are alwaies*

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confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. It is held a good point of wisdom for a man (specially, if he be one that hath much to dispose) to have his will alwaies in a readinesse. And indeed so it is; for it is commanded of God, *Set thine house in order*, saith the Lord by his Prophet unto *Hezekiah*, *Esay 38.1. for thou must dye, and not live.*

But there is one thing more needfull than that is, even to set our soules in order, and to have them alwaies in a readinesse. This is that *one thing that is needfull*, of which our Saviour speaketh, *Luke 10.42.* It stands us upon to make our peace with God, and to acquaint our selves well with him before we dye, or else with what comfort can wee goe unto him, and appeare before him then? yea, we had need doe it now in time of our health, and without delay. *Acquaint thy selfe.*

selfe now with God (saith *Eli-phaz* to *Job*, chapt. 22. 21.) and make peace, 1. Because death commeth upon many, and may doe upon us suddenly, for man knoweth not his times (saith *Solomon*, *Eccl.* 9. 12.) as the fishes that are taken in an evill net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evill time, when it commeth suddenly upon them.

2. When extremity of sicknesse comes, wee shall bee most unfit then to set our soules in order, to begin our acquaintance with God, or to make our peace with him. Remember now thy Creatour (saith *Solomon*, *Eccl.* 12. 1.) in the dayes of thy youth, while the evill dayes come not, nor the yeeres draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them. Hee thought age an unfit time to begin this work in; but our last sicknesse is (certainly) a more unfit time for it, than age is. Then the minde of
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man is wont to be so distracted and troubled, what with worldly cares for them that hee shall leave behind him, what with the extremity of paines that use to accompany sicknesse, and specially with the terrours that rise from the apprehension of his future estate, and from Satans temptations, that he is made incapable of comfort or direction by the best meanes that can be brought unto him. When *Moses* that excellent servant of God, *one of a thousand*, came to the Israelites at such a time, though the message he brought to them were as comfortable as any that they could heare, yet could they receive no comfort or benefit at all by it. *Moses spake so* (saith the text, *Exod. 6. 9.*) *unto the children of Israel; but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruell bondage.*

3. Admit we were never so able and fit to minde this matter then,

then, and to goe about this weighty businesse ; admit wee could be then more apt to seeke reconciliation with God, than at any other time, yet have we just cause to feare that (because we have wilfully neglected this worke so long, and presumptuously put it off till the last houre) the Lord (in his righteous judgement) will refuse to be found of us at that time. Thus wee shall find the Lord hath threatned to doe, *Prov. 1. 24, 26, 28, 29. Because I have called (saith he) and ye refused, I have stretched out mine hand, and no man regarded, I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mocke when your feare commeth. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek mee early, but they shall not find mee; for that they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the feare of the Lord.*

Now, if you shall aske mee, how may this be done?

I answer,

I answer, That he that would make this sure to himselfe, that when hee dyes hee shall goe to heaven, must doe these three things :

1. Hee must repent of all his knowne sinnes. Hee must call them to mind, bewaile them unfainedly, confesse them to God, and crave earnestly of him the pardon of them ; and resolve with himself to forsake them all. For, *1. Sin is the sting of death*, as the Apostle calls it, *1 Corin. 15. 56.* And if that be once done away and forsaken, death can never hurt a man, nor hath he any cause to feare it at all. 2. On the other side, no man can hope to goe to heaven with his sins unrepented of. *Know ye not* (saith the Apostle, *1 Corin. 6. 9.*) *that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdome of God? Bee not deceived ; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankinde, nor sheeves,*

theeves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdome of God.

Any one of these finnes unrepented of, will certainly exclude a man utterly out of the Kingdome of heaven. 3. Though it be dangerous for a man to live in sinne, yet is it a matter of farre greater danger to him to dye in sinne, and to bee overtaken by death before hee have repented of it. This our Saviour noteth as the extreme unhappinesse of the wicked Jewes, and repeates it often, *John 8. 31, 24.* that they should dye in their sins.

2. Get good assurance (by a lively faith) that Christ is thine, and then shalt thou bee able to dye in peace, and in a certaine hope to goe to heaven when thou art dead. When old *Simmon* had scene Christ, (whom hee had waited for by faith, and longed to see) and was thereby confirmed much in that faith he had

had in him before : *Hee blessed God and said (Luk. 2. 28, 29, 30.) Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seene thy salvation.* They that have once seen & embraced Christ as he did, spiritually by faith (I meane) and not corporally onely, shall dye in peace; and none but they can do so. For, 1. It is Christ only that hath overcome death for us, and taken away the sting of it. When the Apostle had said, 1 *Corin. 15. 56. that sin is the sting of death. But thanks be to God (saith he, Verse 57.) which giveth us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Death is overcome, so that it cannot hurt the true beleever at all; but him that is not in Christ, it will sting unto death, even unto the second death. 2. We can have no hope to come to heaven but onely through him. *Christ is in you (saith the Apostle, Col. 1. 27.) the hope of glory :* There is no hope

to come to glory, but onely by Christ. Nay, there is no hope to come to glory through him, unlesse he be in us, unlesse he dwell in us by a lively faith.

3. If thou wouldest bee sure to go to heaven when thou diest, labour whilest thou livest to lead an unblameable, a godly, & fruitfull life; even to do all the good that God gives thee power and opportunity to doe. *As we have opportunity* (saith the Apostle, *Gal. 6. 10.* which none of us can tell how soone it may be taken from us) *let us doe good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith.* See what comfort *Hezekiah* found in this when he was to dye: *Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee* (saith he, *Esay 38. 3.*) *how I have walked before thee in truth, & with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.* Now (on his death-bed) his conscience gave this comfortable testimony unto him, that

that he had lead a holy life ; and now doth hee (even before the Lord) comfort himfelfe in that againſt the feare of death. See alſo what a testimony the holy Apoſtle gives unto good works, even to the workes of charity and mercy in this caſe. *Charge them that are rich in this world* (ſaith hee, 1 Tim. 6. 17, — 19.) *that they doe good, that they be rich in good workes, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate, laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternall life.* Workes of charity (not as a meritorious cauſe of ſalvation, but) as a ſure evidence , that by a lively faith we have intereſt and title to the merits of Chriſt, ſhall be rewarded with ſtable and durable riches in time to come , and will make a man able with confidence of hope to lay hold on eternall life. And that which the Apoſtle ſaith of certaine bad men,

men, 2 Corin. 11. 15. that *their end shall bee according to their workes*, may bee said of all good men also, *their end shall be according to their workes*. A good life will certainly end in a blessed and comfortable death.

Four things are wont to be objected against this, which I will briefly give answer unto.

Experience sheweth daily, that many do dye willingly and quietly, and comfortably also, that have neither lived so unblameably and fruitfully, nor used any such meanes to prepare themselves for death, as you have prescribed.

Obj. 1.

To this I answer, 1. That we may not thinke that every one that dies quietly, and speakes gloriously of his willingnesse to dye, and of the peace and comfort that hee findes in the assurance of his salvation, doth dye happily and comfortably indeed. For the Holy Ghost speaks of some that were most wicked and

Ans.

and wretched men, that *have no bands in their death*, *Psal. 73. 4.* In outward things all things (as well in death as in life) fall alike to good & bad, as *Solomon* saith, *Eccl. 9. 2.* 2. Wee have just cause to suspect the peace & quietnesse of conscience that seems to be in that man, that was never troubled nor disquieted in his mind for his sins : because *the spirit of bondage & feare* useth to goe before *the spirit of adoption* and comfort, as is plaine by the Apostles speech, *Rom. 8. 15.* 3. And lastly, it is certainly a grievous judgement of God, & such as we should all tremble at, to see a man that hath been in his whole life time notoriously wicked, to have no sight at all, nor trouble of mind for his sins before he dies. Our Saviour pronounceth them to be happy men, *Mat. 5. 3, 4, 6.* that are *so poore in spirit*, that they *mourne for it*, and *hunger and thirst after righteousness*. And if this be a blessed thing in every

every childe of God (how unblameable & civill soever his life hath bin) at all times (even in the time of his best health and prosperity) to see and feele in himselfe so just cause of mourning & trouble of mind, as breeds in him an unfatiable desire after the righteousness of God in Christ; then must it needs be a most wooll & cursed thing in a man that hath bin notoriously wicked, to be void of all sight and sense of his sinnes, of all trouble of mind for them, even then when hee is summoned by sickness & death to appeare before the Judgement seate of God, to goe to hell in a sleep, and never to have his conscience awakened till he come there. And indeed so the Prophet speaketh of this as of a most dreadfull judgement of God, when hee gives up wicked men unto this blindness and senselesnesse of heart. *The Lord hath poured out upon you* (saith hee, *Esay 29. 10.*) *the spirit of deep*

deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes, so as you cannot see nor be sensible of your owne estate.

Obj. 2.

But wee see also on the other side in daily experience (say some) that many, who have seemed most religious in all their life time, and carefull to live well, have (yet) shewed very great unwillingnesse and feare to dye; more a great deale than other men usually doe.

Answ. 1.

To this I have twothings to answer: First, that it is indeed possible enough, even for a faithfull and godly man to feelee in himself an unwillingnesse and feare to dye. Good *Hexekiah* wept sore, *Esay* 38.3. when the Prophet brought him word in his sicknesse, that *hee must dye, and not live*: and *David* also prayed oft against death, and that hee might live still, *Psal.* 6. 4, 5. and 30. 8, 9. and 88. 9, 12. It is with many of Gods people in this case, as it was with *Lot*, when hee would leave *Sodome*.

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Though *Lot* had so small comfort in *Sodom* while hee lived in it, *2 Pet. 2. 8.* yet see how unwilling hee was to part with it, *Gen. 19. 16.* He lingred so, that the Angels were faine to pull him out (as it were) by strong hand: *they laid hold upon his hand* (saith the sacred Text) the Lord being mercifull unto him, and brought him forth, and set him without the City. Some unwillingnesse to dye our Saviour tells *Peter* he should find in himselfe, even then when hee should suffer martyrdome for his sake. *When thou shalt be old* (saith hee, *John 21. 18.*) *thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.* And there is good reason to bee given for this. For, 1. Death being a great enemy to the nature of man, and even the dissolution of it, there must needs be in all men (naturally) some feare of it. Such as have been long, and inward,

inward, and deare friends, cannot part for adieu (as wee say) without much unwillingnesse & expreffion of griefe; as we see in the example of *Jonathan & David*, 1 *Sam.* 20. 41. And where were ever found in the world so long, and inward, & deare friends, as the soule and body have bin?

2. Who can thinke of his personall appearance before the Majesty of God without some feare?

3. Lastly, the best of Gods servants, though they know and beleeeve, that when they die they shall not *come into condemnation* (as our Saviour speaketh, *John* 5. 24.) *but are already passed from death unto life*; and therefore have no just cause (in respect of their future estate) to feare death at all, but rather to welcome it, and to rejoyce in it, yet are they regenerated, and (consequently) doe beleeeve but in part. And though the Spirit (the regenerate part) *indeed beewilling* (as our Saviour speaketh, *Mat.*

Mat. 26. 41.) yet the flesh (the unregenerate part) will be apt to shew it selfe *weake* and *unwilling* to die.

But then I answer, secondly, that there is no man that hath lead a godly life, but (first) he discernes and bewailes his owne corruption in this his unwillingnesse to die: hee yeelds not to it, but strives against it by all meanes; and even in this case findes in himselfe that combat betweene the flesh and the spirit, that the Apostle speakes of, *Gal. 5. 17. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.* Secondly, he doth in the end overcome this corruption, and is (by Gods grace) made most willing and desirous to die, before God calls and takes him away; according to that gracious promise made unto all Gods people, to all that have beene carefull to serve and please him, *Psf. 29. 11.*

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The Lord will give strength unto his people, the Lord will blesse his people with peace.

Object. 3

But then there is yet another thing objected against this that hath beene said touching the assurance they may have to die happily and well, that have been careful to live religiously and well; namely, that many who have been most precisely religious, have not onely been void of comfort when they should die, but full of terror in their conscience, calling in question the truth of their faith, and of whatsoever goodnesse hath seemed to be in them, apt to despaire utterly of the mercy of God in Christ.

My answer to this objection must consist of three branches.

Ans. I.

First, it is possible indeed even for a man that hath lived a most innocent and holy life, to expresse in his last sicknesse much terrour, and to breake forth into speeches that tend unto desperation,

ration, and even unto blasphemy also against God. For first, there is no disease so violent and extreme, but the child of God may bee subject unto it, and die of it also as well as any other man. *All things come alike to all* in this respect, as *Solomon* speaketh, *Eccl. 9. 2.* And these things that are objected (as causelesse feares and terrors, ravings, blasphemies, fierce speeches and actions both against themselves and others) are knowne to be the very naturall effects of some violent and extreame diseases. Secondly, it cannot bee denied, but that Satan also is wont to shew the uttermost of his fury and power against Gods servants in their last sicknesse. The last combat that they have with him is wont to be the sharpest of all other. The Apostle telleth us, *Col. 2. 15.* that our blessed Saviour *spoiled the principalities and powers, & made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in his crosse.*

All the principalities and powers of Hell did then set upon him, and shewed their uttermost strength and rage against him. This Christ did fore-see, and told his Disciples of also before hand : *The prince of this world commeth* (saith he, *John* 14.30.) *and hath nothing in mee* : as if he should say, I know well that Satan in my passion (which is now at hand) will come and assault mee with all his forces, but *hee hath nothing* (nothing of his owne, no corruption at all) *in me*, and therefore shall lose his labour, and do me no hurt at all. And as he did with Christ our head, so hath he bin wont to deale also with the best of his members & servants, even to set upon them most fiercely in their last sickness; and that for two causes: 1. Because he sees his time and opportunity that hee can have with them is now so short *having great wrath* (saith the voice from heaven,

ven, *Revel. I 2. 12.*) *because hee knoweth that he hath but a short time.* 2. Because he knoweth we are then through pains (& feares, and distempers of body & mind) like to be most weak and unable to resist him.

Secondly, though godly men may have such conflicts with Satan, and experience of his most fiery assaults upon their death-beds, yet the Lord, *the God of peace is wont to tread downe Satan under their feet,* (as the Apostle speakes, *Rom. 16. 20.*) before they dye. Hee useth to make them (even in this life) *more than conquerours* over that *distresse and anguish* which his assaults hath brought them unto. *In all these we are more than conquerours* (saith he, *Romanes 8. 37.*) *through him that loved us.* Yea, the experience of many of Gods servants hath proved, that these bitter conflicts of theirs have ended in more abundance of

peace and comfort, than ever they found in their lives before : and that not inwardly onely in their own feeling; but God hath made them able also to expresse it outwardly, to the exceeding comfort and admiration of them that have beene about them.

Thirdly and lastly, although it should so fall out, that the Lord (for the further hardning of wicked men, or for some other causes best knowne to himselfe, *whose judgements are unsearchable, and his wayes past finding out*, as the Apostle speaketh, *Ro. 11. 33.*) should take away any of his servants in these fearfull fits and conflicts, and utterly disable them from expressing by word or gesture the victory over them; and the comfort that they have ended in; yet are we to rest confidently assured of this, that every one that hath lead a good and godly life, doth certainly die blessedly and comfortably, though wee cannot perceive it; Because

Because we are to *walke by faith* and not by sight, as the Apostle teacheth us, 2 Cor. .7. and more credit is to bee given to the Word of God, than to all sense and experience of men: And therefore whatsoever wee heare them speake, or see in the maner of their death, we should resolve with Solomon, Eccl. 8. 12. *Yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that feare God, which feare before him.* For the Lord hath expressely said of every godly man, Prov. 14. 32. *The righteous hath hope in his death:* and commanded us, Psalm. 37. 37. to *marke the perfect man, and behold the upright;* assuring us that *the end of that man is peace.*

The fourth and last thing that may bee objected against that which hath been said, is this; If the death of all the godly be so blessed and happy, why hath there beene such mourning and lamentation for their death among Gods people, as wee see

Obj. 4.

there was both in the old Testament for the death of *Jacob*, *Gen.* 50. 10. and of *Samuel*, *1 Sam.* 25. 1. and of many more; and in the new Testament also, for the death of *Steven*, *Act.* 8. 2. and of *Tabitha*, *Act.* 9. 36. and sundry others?

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FINIS.

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Delivered
IN SUNDRY SER-
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in the year 1625.

*By that late Faithfull and Worthy
Minister of Jesus Christ,*

ARTH. HILDERSAM.

LONDON,

Printed by R.Y. for Edw. Brewster, and
are to be sold at his Shop upon Fleece
bridge, at the signe of the Bible. 1636.





TO HIS MOST
WORTHY, AND

much honoured Patron

Master *William Cokayne*,

Merchant, at his house

in *Ausline Fryers* in

LONDON.

SIR,



H O P E the
world will not
blame mee for
increasing the
crowd of En-
glish Writers, with which
it is so much troubled: nor
censure mee of folly for
thrusting this little Booke
into the throng, where it is
like to bee smothered, if I

A 3

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by humble and faithfull prayer.

FINIS.



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